

THE  
GOLDEN RULE  
OF  
MENTAL PRAYER  
COMPOSED BY  
Y. B. P.  
PETER DE  
ALCANTARA  
FRANCISCO





Venerabilis frater Dei F. PETRVS DE ALCANTARA Hff. Ordinis  
Minor. de Officiis S. P. Franc. Discal. fund. Prou. S. Iosoph. à qua  
plures alii dimanarunt, ac P. Spiritualis B. M. Teresa de Iesu.

A  
GOLDEN TREATISE  
OF  
MENTALL PRAIER,

With diuerse spirituall rules and directions  
no lesse profitable then necessarie  
for all sortes of people.

First composed by the venerable and blessed Fa-  
ther, FR. PETER DE ALCANTARA,  
of the Seraphicall Order of S. Francis. Beatified  
the 18. of Aprill. 1622.

Translated into English by G. VV.

To vvhich is prefixed a breife relation of the life, and  
death of the same Father vvritten by G. VV.  
of the same Order and obseruance.



AT BRVXELLES,

By the Widowe of HVBERT ANTOINE, called  
Velpius, sworne Printer of the Court, at the  
signe of the golden Eagle by the  
Palace. 1632.

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*Permissu Superiorum.*

GOLDEN TREASURE

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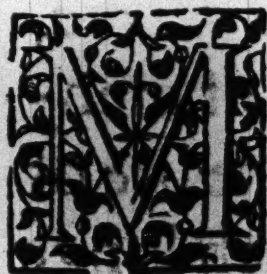
OF





TO THE RIGHT  
HONOURABLE  
AND TRULY  
VERTUOUS LADY,  
THE LADY  
ELIANOR  
POWES, &c.

*All prosperitie in this world,  
and euerlastinge glorie in  
the world to come.*



ADAM,  
Although the  
greatnes of your  
blood doth challenge much

## THE EPISTLE

respect, yet I knowe by experience, that your LADISHIP thinketh vertue to be only and true nobilitie; and that to be Gods seruāt, you esteeme it your greatest glorie. This therefore vertuous and religious disposition of yours, beinge the only loadstone that draweth my affection to loue, and honour you, hath emboldened me to present vnto your LADISHIPS veiue, this little treatise of mental prayer, vvith the life of the Authour, vvich longe since, and alvvayes from  
the

## DEDICATORIE.

the first time I took it in  
hand, I intended to shrowde  
vnder the yvinges of your  
protection, but beinge hin-  
dred by some occasions,  
vyherin holy obedience  
hath employed me; I could  
neuer compas my desires  
till nowve. I nowve ther-  
fore send it to your LADI-  
SHIP desiringe you to ac-  
cept of it, not for my de-  
sertes, vvhich indeede haue  
bene none to claime such  
a fauour, but for the digni-  
tie of the matter of vvhich  
it treateth (though I am  
afraied made much worse



THE EPIST. DEDIC.

by my vnskilfull pen ) as  
also for the sanctitie of the  
Authour vvho made it, and  
your LADISHIP vvill in-  
crease my many obliga-  
tions tovvardes you, and  
alvvayes oblige me to rest  
and remaine.

M A D A M,

Your honors poore beadsman,

GILES VVILLOUGHBY.



A  
BREIFE RELATION  
OF  
THE LIFE AND DEATH  
OF  
THE BLESSED FATHER  
FR. PETER DE  
ALCANTARA,  
FRANCISCAN FRYAR.

*Written by G. VV. of the same Order &  
obseruance.*

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THE PROLOGVE.

**M**isericordias Do-  
mini in æternum  
cantabo. (a) *I will* (a) *Psalm. 33.*  
*singe the mercies of*  
*our Lord for euer, saith that*  
*Kingly Prophet DAVID:*  
*And*



## THE PROLOGVE.

And not without cause: for so great and vnspeakable, are the mercie-workes of the almightie; which out of the bowells of his infinite goodnes, he hath shewed to mankinde from the first instant of his creation, that the toungues of men and Angells are neuer able to expresse them.

How wonderfull was this benefit; that creatinge man after his owne (b) image and likenes, (c) he would haue made him partaker of eternall felicitie, and vested with his originall iustice, vvithout (d) death or any passage by misery would haue associated him with the companie of Angells, if he had not, by his owne default, violated the lawes of his creatour? notwithstandinge this act of malice, the diuine

(b) Gen. 1.  
26.

(c) Magister  
sent. lib. 2.  
dist. 10.

(d) Gabriel.  
lib. 2. dist. 19.

quest. vnica,  
art. 2.

## THE PROLOGVE.

diuine clemencie would not suffer  
the worke of his powerfull handes,  
so to perish : but he accordinge to  
the diuerficie of times, (e) alwaies  
ordeined opportune remedies, to re-  
duce wanderinge man to the right  
way of his owne saluation. Nowe  
manifestinge his diuine pleasure by  
the meanes of Angels : nowe sen-  
dinge the Patriarchs replenished  
with his heauenly grace, who by  
their good example, might stirr  
them vp to pietie : then sendinge the  
Prophets illuminated with his holy  
spirit, not only to preach the present  
benefits exhibited to mankind, but  
also to foretell the future incarna-  
tion of the Sonne of God, with the  
mysterie of his death and passion,  
by meanes of which man should  
be loosed from the power of Satan,  
and

(e) Scotus lib.

4. dist. 1. qu.

7. n. 2.

# THE PROLOGVE.

and eased of the heavy load of his transgressions.

(f) (Religiosi)

Ecclesia pars

selectior, &

sapientior; si-

quidem ij sa-

pientiores ha-

liti sunt, quā

reliquū mor-

talium vul-

gus, qui seip-

fos à mundi

cōsortio jēgre-

garant, ut vi-

tā suam Deo

consecrāunt.

Naxianz ora

in laudē Basi-

lij \* Beati illi

certē, ac ter

beati, ut qui

Dei amore fla-

grāunt, atq;

ob eius amorē

omnia proni-

bilo duxerūt,

siquidē lacry-

mas profudē-

runt dieq; ac

nocte in luctu

versati sunt,

ut eternam

consolationem

adipiscerētur:

Thus farr hath that impene-  
trable abyss of the diuine clemencie,  
sweetly disposed all thinges, requi-  
site for the sauinge of the soule of  
man. But if we will extend our  
thoughtes a little further, and call  
to mind the great benefits, still  
heaped vpon man, after the ascen-  
sion of our blessed Sauour, we shall  
finde them innumerable. VVho is  
not astonished at the vocation of  
mankinde, that the Apostolicall  
trumpet of a few men, soundinge  
to humane eares, the Euangelicall  
truth, through the wholl world,  
should rouse vp (f) soules makinge  
thē \* happy & thrice happy to for-  
sake all worldly vanities? to be-  
take themselves to a state of per-  
fection;



# THE PROLOGVE.

section; to sell all they haue and giue to the poore : to liue in perpetuall chastitie, and simple obedience: to spend their dayes in rigorous penance, watchinge, fasting and prayer, and finally to renounce all the seeminge pleasures (for (g) true there are none) which the flattering world could afford vnto the.

These things are dayly put in practice by many, who professe the gospell of Christ. For where Catholique Religion flourisheth, we see diuerse Monasteries of men and women, filled with religious soules, who consecrate themselves a perpetuall sacrifice to the almightie.

How many religious doe vve see honoured vvith Priestly function, (an office requiringe more

carner. suam  
fame & huius  
vigilia  
consecratio, ut  
illic paradisi  
dilectio &  
gaudia illas  
exercent.  
Damascen. in  
bist. b. Ioseph  
ph. u.  
(g) consolatio  
mundi vult, &  
ad nihil vili-  
tis, & quod  
magis meta-  
dum est, vera  
& salubris  
consolatio  
impedimentum.  
D. Ber. in ser.  
vir. Natio sic  
se habet vni-  
uersa sub sa-  
le, vniuersa sic  
in eis vere  
incunda, om-  
nis siquidem  
laboris reme-  
dium, alterius  
laboris initium  
est. Idem in  
se. m. de pri-  
mordijs &  
medijs nouiss.  
vide plura  
apud Hieron.

then

## THE PROLOGVE.

Placit de bono then humane (h) puritie and a  
 stat. relig. l. 3. burthen scarcely to be supported by  
 cap. 10. Angels shoulders) executing their  
 (h) Quo non charge vwith great integritie of  
 oportet esse minde, carefull of their ovvne, and  
 puritatem tali zealous of the sauinge of their  
 fructu sacri- neighbours soules, vwho by their  
 fici: quo sola- holy doctrine and exemplare liues,  
 ri radio non preach to the Christian vworld a  
 plenididorem reformation: vwho spare noe paines  
 manu carnem or tedious travells, to propagate the  
 hanc diuiden- faith  
 tem l os quod  
 igni spiritali  
 repletur, lin-  
 gua qua tre-  
 mendo nimis  
 sanguine ra-  
 desit. Sic D.  
 chrys. hom.  
 83. in Mat.

And Pope Gelasius vwritinge to Elpidius Bishop, doth  
 excellently set dovne the great purity required to  
 Preistly function sayinge: *Sacrosancta Religio quae Catholi-*  
*cam continet disciplinam, tantam sibi reuerentiam vendicat, ut*  
*eam quilibet nisi pura conscientia, non audeat peruenire: nam*  
*quomodo ad diuini mysterij consecrationem celestis spiritus inuo-*  
*catus adueniat, si sacerdos & qui eam adesse deprecetur crimi-*  
*nosi plenus actionibus reprobis* 1. q. 1. c. SACROSANCTA.  
 Although a vvicked Preist doth consecrate and admini-  
 ster the Sacramentes truely, yet he sinneth greiuously in  
 cōsecratinge, & administratinge vvvorthily, *Sacristia im-*  
*piarum eis ipsi suberunt qui offerunt impie* 1. q. 1. c. PER ISAIAH,  
 necesse est, vt esse munda studeat manus, quae dilatae sordes co-  
 tat: ne talia quaeque deteritis inquinet, si sordida ipsa stercoris la-  
 tam tenet. Greg. in regeſto. l. 1. Epist. 24. & ponitur 1. qu. 1. cap.  
 NECESSE EST.

## THE PROLOGVE.

faith of IESVS CHRIST, to  
heathens and infidells; vvhich con-  
trarily labour in God almighty  
vineyard, exposinge their liues for  
the name of IESVS. Indies  
both east and west are vvitnes-  
ses of their zealous and heroick spi-  
rits, there they sealed the truth of  
the gospel vvvith the effusion of  
their sacred blood. Yea vvhich actes  
memorable in the church of God  
are there, vvhich (i) these men  
haue not had a very greate stroke.  
And finally they so well employ, and  
multiply those talentes, vvhich the  
great commander of heauen and  
earth, hath bestowed vpon them  
there, that assuredly they may ex-  
pect an eternall rewdard in the  
Kingedome of heauen hereaf-  
ter.

(i) Hieron.  
Platus de ho-  
no statu re-  
lig. l. 2. c. 30.

But



## THE PROLOGVE.

(k) Nuptia  
replet terram  
virginitas  
paradisum. D.  
Hieron.

(l) Flos est il-  
le Ecclesiastici  
germinis, de-  
cus atque or-  
namentū gra-  
tia spiriua-  
lis, lata, indol-  
is, laudis &  
honoris, opus  
integrum atq;  
incompactum.  
Dei imagine re-  
spondens, ad  
sanctimoniam  
Dñi, illustrior  
portio gregis  
Christi, gau-  
det per ipsas,  
atque in illis  
largiter floret  
S. Matris Ec-  
clesie gloriosa  
fecunditas,  
quantoq; plus  
gloriosa Vir-  
ginitas nu-  
mero suo ad-  
dit, tanto plus  
gaudium ma-  
tris augetur.  
Cypr. de babis.  
virg. l. 4. c. 24

But that which is more admi-  
rable, to see a multitude of the  
weaker sexe, to abandon all world-  
ly pleasures: they who in the world  
might haue swoome in brauery, and  
haue had all thinges at their owne  
commaund; to inclose themselves in  
a retired Cloister, there to spend  
their dayes in penance, and to  
consecrate the very flower of their  
springinge youth, a sweet smelling  
sacrifice to their celestiall spouse  
CHRIST IESVS. These truly  
are those that (k) fill and beautifie  
the garden of paradise with lillies  
of puritie: these are the (l) flowers  
of our holy mother the Catholique  
Church, which make her glorious  
and fruitfull. These are they, that  
make that happie chaunge, a mo-  
ments fadinge pleasure, for an im-

mor-

## THE PROLOGUE

mortall crowne of glorie.

Thus we see perpetuall rivers  
streaminge from the fountaine of  
God almighties mercie. But let vs  
descend a litle further into his  
aboundant charitie, and take notice  
of his fatherly providence, that in  
process of declininge times, when  
the blood of our redeemer, hath of-  
tentimes begun to wax cold in the  
hearts of men, he would not suffer  
it altogether to be extinguished, but  
accordinge to varietie of times, ne-  
uer ceased to repaire his church by  
the ministry of some elected seruants,  
whom he sent into this world as se-  
cond Apostles, who by their exam-  
ple, and doctrine might drawe men  
out of the mire of their sinnes, re-  
newe the seruour of our blessed Sa-  
uiours passion, and reduce collapsed

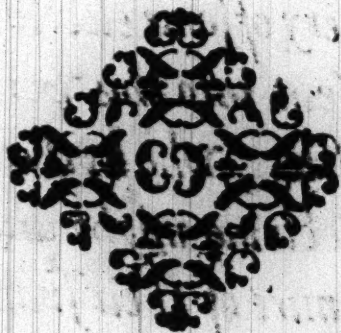
b

disci-



## THE PROLOGVE.

discipline to her former rigour;  
Many hath he sent for this end, and  
amongst many this blessed Saint,  
S. PETER DE ALCAN-  
TARA, a man from his very  
cradle consecrated to Evangelicall  
perfection; he was a faithfull labour-  
er in our Lords vineyard, with  
great fidelitie performinge his com-  
manded taske, as it will plainly ap-  
peare by that which followeth in  
his life.



CHAP.



CHAP. I.  
OF THE BIRTH  
AND  
EDUCATION,  
OF BLESSED  
ALCANTARA,

*And of his enteringe into  
Religion.*

(a) *Ciuitas  
Hispanie mi-  
litia ordinis*

*Alcantarenfis  
clara. Iste or-  
do prout con-  
stat exprimit.*

*illi concessa  
an. Dñi 1174.*

*facti institutus  
a Dño Come-  
sis Hernandes*

*1174.*

*1174.*

*1174.*

*1174.*

*1174.*

*1174.*

**H**IS blessed Saint was  
borne at (a) *Norba Cesa-*  
*ura*, vulgarly called A L-  
CANTARA, in the yeare  
of our Lord 1499. in the  
reigne of Pope ALEXANDER the  
sixth, and FERDINANDO Catholique  
Kings of Spaine. His Father was called  
BACHILIER GARAVITO, and  
his Mother MARIA VELER  
DE SENABRIA, both of good  
qualitie, but especially honoured for  
their vertues.

**The Life**

They brought up their young  
Sonne in the feare of God, and sowed  
in him the seedes of vertue ; they put  
him to schoole where, as he profited in  
learninge, so his obedience towards his  
parentes did likewise increase. Although  
he was a child, yet he withdrew him-  
selfe from the common sportes of chil-  
dren, and sorted himselfe amongst men,  
whome he sawe inclined to deuotion.  
In these his tender yeares he addicted  
himselfe to the workes of mercie : he  
applied himselfe seriously to learne the  
Christian doctrine : he often visited  
churches, and holy places, he frequen-  
ted the Sacramentes, and continually em-  
ployed himselfe in good workes : all  
which did abundantly presage his fu-  
ture sanctitie, but more confirmed it,  
by that which followed immediately,  
for he was scarce sixtene yeares of age,  
when, before he knewe, he began to  
loath the world, and when the young  
sparkes of his vertues began to breake  
into a flame of deuotion. He opened  
the doores of his soule to the inspirations  
of the holy Ghost : and as he excelled  
his fellowe studentes in science, so he  
knewe that all science was igno-  
rance without the right knowledge of  
God.



*of blessed Aleantara.*

God. Therefore from that time forward he applied his minde to heavenly wisdom, and busied himselfe chiefly to knowe what should be most acceptable to his sacred Maiestie.

About that time, there was a famous and reformed monastery of FRANCISCANS in the prouince of S. GABRIEL, three miles from VALENTIA, whether he addressed himselfe, there to bringe his good desires to a ioyfull periode. But as he went alonge towards this place, he came to a great riuer, called *Tiartar*, which without boate, was impossible to be passed ouer. He seeinge this vnexpected barr, to stop his happy iournie, looked about, hopinge to espye some waterman, who might carry him ouer, but when he could see none, to giue him any assistance: he cast his eies to heauen, and with great anxietie lamented this unhappie hindrance. Behold! vpon the suddaine (as he himselfe related) (c) he was miraculously transported on the other side of the riuer, without any notable motion, that he could perceiue.

(c) *Marianus in eius vita cap. 1.*

This miracle was not vnlike to that, when the riuer of Iordane stood still for the Children of ISRAEL to pass;

*The life*

or when S. P E T E R walked vpon the waues of the sea: and indeed, it was no small beginninge of God almighties many labours, exhibited to this blessed Saint.

This obstacle beinge remoued, he passed the other part of his way, (the holy Ghost beinge his guide) without any difficultie, and at length arriued to his desired harbour, this solitarie monastrie, situated amongst great rocks, which they comonly call *Los Manos*, where he came to the Fathers, and asked the habit of S. F R A N C I S of them, who did graunt it to him with as much charitie, as he begged it with humilitie.

But when this blessed Saint considered his poore habitation, sequestred from the companie of men, and abstracted from all worldly tumultes. And when he sawe himselfe vested in his penitentiall weede, we may well imagine with what meditations he spurred himselfe forward in God almighties seruice. He spake to his owne soule these or the like wordes, behold, thou hast now accomplished thy desire, thou art now arriued to the land of promise, and climed vp to the,

(d) hi,,

of blessed Alcantara.

(d) highest mountaine of God al-  
 mighties fauour to mortall mā in this  
 vale of misery (that is) the sacred state  
 of a religious life, where, by howe  
 much more thou art sequestred from  
 the pleasures of the flattering world,  
 the more thou enioyest the freedom  
 of thy spirit. Thou art now come to  
 the house of God, in which it is better  
 for the to be an abiect then to dwell  
 in the courtes of Princes; all occasions  
 of offending thy creatour are now  
 taken away, thy soule is now sure  
 not to be defiled with the pitch of  
 euill conuersation. Thy companie  
 now are (e) terrestriall Angels, who  
 though they liue on earth, yet they  
 haue their conuersation in heauen, all  
 whose actions incite thee to nothinge  
 else but to aspire vnto perfection.  
 Thou findest here no snares to en-  
 tangle thee in worldly vanities, no  
 flatterers to applaud thee when thou  
 doest offend, or any thinge else to  
 withdrawe thy affection from the  
 Cross of CHRIST. Thy beloued  
 spouse hath brought thee now into  
 this holy desert, to recreate thy soule  
 with his heauenly consolations (f) here  
 abstracted from all wordly tumoules,  
 it may



or when S. PETER walked vpon the wanes of the sea: and indeed, it was no small beginninge of God almighties many fauours, exhibited to this blessed Saint.

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But when this blessed Saint considered his poore habitation, sequestred from the companie of men, and abstracted from all worldly tumults. And when he sawe himselfe vested in his penitentiall weede, we may well imagine with what meditations he spurred himselfe forward in God almighties seruice. He spake to his owne soule these or the like wordes, behold, thou hast now accomplished thy desire, thou art now arriued to the land of promise, and climbed vp to the,

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(d) *in altissimis montibus, in sublimi, in quietum & delicijs sacali, vacat tibi, maiores habet delicias spiritus, D. Hier. l. 2. de solitudinibus, Epist. 3. ad Paulinum.*

(e) *Angeli nunc appellamus, homines celestes, an Angelos terrestres dicimus, sed conuersationem habentem in celis. D. Bernardus, sermo ad fratres de monte Dei.*

(f) *Anima & corpore con-*



# The life

it may attend only to diuine wisdom,  
 & the noise of all temporall cares, be-  
 inge hyst & silent, it may be wholly  
 employed in sacred contemplation, &  
 rauished with eternall pleasures. God,  
 almightie hath nowe waisted thee,  
 ouer this troublesome sea, and placed  
 thee heere, in the quiete harbour of  
 thy saluation, in which state in respect  
 of thy former, thou art farr more,  
 sure to (g) fall seldomer, rise sooner,  
 stand more securely, liue more  
 sweetly, and dye more confidently.  
 Goe too, I say, why standest thou,  
 still? why camest thou hether? Con-  
 sider thy course habit, and see what  
 penance it exacteth? Looke vpon  
 the place, and reflect what spirit it,  
 teacheth thee? be couragious and  
 make no delay, thy death is certaine,  
 and thy hower vncertaine, the iudge is  
 at hand, (h) Alas! the pleasure of this  
 world is short, but the punishment for  
 it perpetuall. A little sufferinge here  
 and infinite glorie hereafter. Thus,  
 this newe soldiari of CHRIST spent  
 his time, in holy discourses, sometimes  
 of God almighties maiestie, sometimes  
 of his owne miserie: although his pre-  
 cedent conuersation to Religion was a  
 mir-

*of blessed Alcantara.*

mirrour of perfection, yet he stode not still in that grace, he had already gotten, but continually aspired to higher, in which he farr excelled his fellowenotices. Two vertues were cheifly eminent in him: simplicitie and puritie. He likewise had a perfect obliuion of all wordly thinges. He greedily desired, and willingly accepted of the inferiour, and basest employmentes of the monasterie. Neither did he esteeme it a dishonour to him to cast himselfe at the feete of the Friers, but was most willinge to serue euery one at their beck. In this his first yeare he laied such groundes of humilitie, that in his wholl life after he was a rare example, and patterne of this vertue. Neither when he was promoted to superioritie, did he leaue of his humble exercises. Thus goinge from grace to grace, from vertue to vertue, his good example was a burninge lampe to giue others light, to imitate his vertues, that the wholl monasterie began euerie day more and more to flourish in regular obseruance, and in the opinion of the world, to get a great name of sanctitie.

CHAP.

## CHAP. II.

*Of his naturall gifts, and of his  
prudence, and mortification of  
his eyes.*

**H**E was an elected vessell, beautified with all the iewells of vertues, and as his minde was replenished with supernaturall gifts, so his bodie wanted not its naturall graces. Hewas of a spare bodie, but comely, he had a graue and modest looke, his eyes were sparklinge, tokens of the fire of diuine loue, which was in his soule inuisible to the cie. There was not one member in that man, which was not subordinate to the rule of reason. His speech was meeke and humble, his conuersation Angelicall. He had an excellent naturall witt, ioyned with a happy memorie: he had likewise a singular good iudgement (as appeared in his gouernment) he was courageous in goinge through with busines which did tend to God Almightyes honour and the good of religion: he was gratefull to all, giuinge



of blessed *Alcantara*.

uinge to euerie one their due respect: he was dexterous in his actions, modest in correctinge: and a peace maker, reconcilinge those who vpon any occasion, had beene at variance. In his sermons he was hott but mouinge: in hearinge of confessions he was a helper, a counsailler, and a comforter: in his ordinary speech he was not fawninge, nor bitinge, and his conuersation without any pernacitie: and to conclude all in a fewe wordes: he was a man of an other world, of whome we may iustly say as *(a)* Alexander Hales saied of S. Bonauenture. That he was a man, in whome Adam seemed not to haue failed. He was a reformer, Prelate, Master, and pattern of perfection, of the Seraphicall Order of our holy Father S. Francis, who through so many Prouinces, and remote Kingdomes, illustrated this sacred institution, as an other Apostle, preordained by God Almighty for this happie end.

(a) *Antonie Possennius in sacro apparatu de scriptoribus Eccles. tom. 1. de D<sup>i</sup> Bonauent.*

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

*Of his religious simplicitie, and mortification of his eies.*

**B**Vt to descend to particulars, wherein his religious simplicitie was manifested, He was so absorbed in God almightie, that he minded nothinge of exteriour thinges. When he was a younge brother keepinge the keyes of the pauntrie, for the space of six months, there was in the pauntrie grapes and pomgranades, which lay so palpably, that none could chosse but see the, but he for that space neither sawe, nor smelt, much lesse touched them: beinge asked why he did not giue them ynto the brothers, he humbly answered, that he knewe of none that were there. An other time, liuinge fower yeares in an other cloister, he neuer tooke notice of a great tree which stood in the midst of the court, which was obuious to euery ones eie. Being a yeare in an other place, and asked what his cell was made of, he answered,

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*of blessed alcantara.*

swered, he knew not whether it was of  
stone, or brick, or ywood. And a chap-  
pell vvhich he frequented about others,  
yet he knewe neither situation, forme,  
or any ornament vvhich did belonge  
thervnto. He vvas vvont to say to blef-  
sed THERESIA his ghostly child,  
that he knewe neuer a brother in his  
monasterie, but only by his speech. Mo-  
reouer he vvas so mortified in his eies,  
that vyhere soeuer he vvas, he knewe  
no difference in places, no distance of  
cells, and finally he vvas a dead man to  
all exteriour thinges. Neither vvas this  
mortification any stupiditie of nature,  
or vvant of senses, but his continuall bu-  
syinge his thoughts vpo God almighty,  
a more noble, and higher obiect. Who  
could but thinke this chaste child of  
S. FRANCIS to haue made a coue-  
nant vvith his eies, not to behold a vir-  
gine? and vvell he might be said that  
sonne of a doue, vvhose eies vv ere vvaf-  
hed vvith the milke of innocency. He  
kept such a continuall guard over his  
eies, that he neuer knewe any vvoman  
by her face. There vvas a certaine noble  
matron famous for her vertue, vvho  
vvas vvont at PLACENTIA, some  
times to yisite the holy Father, for his  
spi-



spirituall counsell she meetinge him at  
**A** **D** **V** **L** **A**, saluted him, and expressed  
 to him the difficulties of her state, he  
 modestly denied, that he euer saue the  
 woman. If euer he opened his eies, it  
 was in the quire, though he had so  
 good a memory, that he knewe most  
 part of the office without booke. Be-  
 inge Superiour he did particularly cor-  
 rect this imperfection vvith seueritie,  
 knowinge, nothinge to be more preiu-  
 diciall to the soule, then to set open  
 those vvindowes, at vvwhich, doth enter  
 the greater part of sinne, that doth de-  
 file the heart of man.



of blessed Alcantara.

## CHAP. IV.

*VVith vvhat austeritie and mortification the holy Father liued.*

**B**E CAUSE for the most part this holy Father liued in solitarie conuentes, most remote from vvorldly tumults, or rather heremities, all his rigourous penances, could not be taken notice of by any. Nevertheless vve vvill set downe some, vvich he could not hide from those, vvith vvhom he conversed.

He did vvare for seauen yeares together a haire shirt full of hard knots, S. THERESIA affirmeth that he vvore it tventie yeares.

Besides plates of Iron, and other things vvhervvith he tyrannized ouer his tender flesh. His disciplines vvere so frequent and bloodie, that he seemed rather the trunk of a tree then a humane bodie. He vvould neuer couer his head although it rayned neuer so fast, or the sun



*The life*

sun shined neuer so hott. His diet was so slender, and meane, that in his youth, and old age he did eate nothinge but browne bread, and the most mustie crusts that he could finde. If sometimes he recreated himselfe with a fewe boyled hearbes, he would not be so delicious as to eate them with oyle. Beinge superiour he caused as many beanes and pease to be boyled at once, as should serue the conuent for seauen dayes together, which austeritie his subjects most willingly embraced, beinge glad in some measure to immitate their cheife. But he seasoned his owne portion with ashes, or some vngratefull liquour, least his pallate should take pleasure in his meate.

Mother **THERESIA** hath heard his companions say, that some times he liued eight dayes together without any meate or drinke, especially when with more violence, he addicted himselfe to deuotion. For he suffered in his prayers frequent raptures and extasies, of which (saith she) I am wittnesse. He neuer drake wine but water, though for the infirmittie of his stomach it was prescribed to him by the Phisitian: but he constantly refused it sayinge that nothinge was so

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repugnant to holy pouertie, and abstinence, as flesh and wine, the one beinge an enemy to chastitie, the other to contemplation, both which, as long as he liued, by Gods grace he would enioy. I will sett downe for the satisfaction of the deuout reader the wordes of euer blessed THERESIA, the glorie and foundresse of the discailed Carmelites, to whome he was some times ghostly Father, of whome she confesseth to haue receiued much spirituall comfort; whose authoritie, by reason of her renowned sanctitie, and liuinge at the same time with him, is without controull. Her wordes be these. (a) God almightie bereaued vs of a man of admirable example, vvhen he tooke out of this life, Father PETER OF ALCANTARA, the vvorld it seemeth could endure no longer so great perfection, they say that our health is not so good, that norre those times be past, this holy man vvvas of this time, he vvvas satt in spirit, as those of other ages, he had also the vvorld vnder his feete, for though vve doe not goe barefoote, nor doe such austere penance as he did, there are many thinges (as I haue saied else vvhere) to treade downe the vvorld vvith all. And our Lord teacheth them, vvhen he seeth such a minde, as he

(a) Ex vita  
B. Theresia  
cap. 27.

### The life

gaue in great measure to this holy man,  
vvhich I speake of , to continue 47. yeares  
together in such austere penance , as all  
knowe. I vvill declare some part of it , for  
I knowe that it is all true. He told it to me  
and to an other , from vvhome he concealed  
little , and the cause vvhy he told it me , vvvas  
the great loue vvwhich he bare me, and vvwhich  
our Lord gaue him to defende me , and en-  
courage me, in the time of so great necessitie,  
as that vvvas, vvwhich I haue spoken of , and  
vvill declare farther ; it seemeth to me, that  
he told me , that he had slept no more but  
an horver and halfe betvvixt day and night  
for the space of 40. yeares, and that this vvvas  
the greatest difficultie he forvnd in his pe-  
nance at the beginninge , to ouercome his  
sleepe , and for this cause he did alvvayes,  
Eiher kneele or stand , and vvhen he slept it  
vvvas sittinge leaninge his head against a little  
peece of vvood, vvwhich he had driuen into the  
vvall , he could not lye dovvn though he  
vvould, for his cell as is knowne, vvvas no longer  
then forver foot and an halfe , in all these  
yeares he neuer did put on his capuce , how  
great sun-shine or raine soeuer it vvvas, neither  
had he any thinge on his feet , nor other gar-  
ment, but his habit of course cloth, vvithout  
any other thinge next his skin , and this as  
freight as could be endured, and a short cloke  
of the



of blessed Alcantara,

of the same vpon it, he told me that vhen it  
vvas very cold he did putt it of, and opened  
the dore and little vvindowve of his cell, that  
astervvard vwhen he did putt his cloke on  
again, and shutt his dore, he might giue  
some contentment and recreat his bodie,  
vvhich before vvas frozen vvith cold. He did  
very ordinarily eate but once in three dayes;  
and he asked me at vvhat I marvelled, for it  
vvas verie possible, for one that accustomed  
himselfe to it. His pouerty vvas extreame, and  
likevvise his mortification in his youth, &c.  
VVith all his sanctitie he vvas verie affable,  
though he vsed not many vvordes, if he vvere  
not spoken too, for then he vvas verie plea-  
sing, hauinge a good vnderstandinge. And a  
little after. His end vvas like his life preach-  
inge and admonishinge his Fryars. VVhen i.  
savve death dravve nighe, he said the Psalme:  
Lætatus sum in his quæ dicta sunt mihi;  
and kneelinge dovne depar. d. Since our Lord  
hath let me enioy him more .then in his life,  
giuinge me aduise and counsell in many thinges  
I haue seene him many times in exceedinge  
great glorie; the first time he appeared vnto  
me, he saied: O happie penāce which did  
merit such a reward! and many other  
thinges. A yeare before he died, he appeared to  
me beinge absent, and I knewe that he should  
dye, and I sent him vvord beinge some leagues

### The life

from hence. When he gaue vp the ghost, he appeared to me and sayed, that he vvent to rest, I beleened it not, I told some of it, and eight dayes after the nerves came that he vvas dead, or rather began to liue for euer. Behold here his austeritie endeth vwith so great glorie, he seemed to comfort me more nowre, then vwhen he vvas in this vworld. Our Lord told me once, that nothinge should be asked in his name, vvhich he vwould not beare. I haue seene many thinges fulfilled vvhich I haue desired him to aske of our Lord; he be blessed for euer. Amen. And in the 30. Chapter of her life she sayeth as followeth: Our Lord vouchsafed to remedy a great part of my trouble, and for that tyme the vvholl, by bringinge to this place the blessed Father PETER OF ALCANTARA, of vvhome I haue already made mention, and spoken somethinge of his penance, for amongst other thinges, I vvas certified, that for 20. yeares he had vvworne a cilice of plate continually. He is the authour of certaine little bookes of prayer, vvhich are nowv much vsed in the spanish tongue, for as one, that hath exercised it vvell he vvwrote very profitably, giuinge most excellent rules to those, vvhoe addict themselves to prayer. He obserued the first rule of S. FRANCIS vwith all rigour, and other thinges vvhich I haue related before. Thus she. And so much

of blessed Alcantara.

much shall suffice to speake of, but part  
of his rigorous penance, it was his fer-  
uent zeale, and loue of God, not strenght  
of bodie, which made this crabbed way  
of penance easy to his holie spirit:  
whose example may (though not in so  
great a measure as he did) iustly moue  
vs, to shake of that old and selfe-loue  
excuse of ours, in sayinge, our bodies are  
weake, when as our willes are fro-  
zen, and so mce, that we are afrayed to  
expose our carcasse but to a poore trial:  
the heathen Seneeca will check our  
indeuotion, who sayeth: (b) Not because  
certaine things are hard, therefore we  
nor doe them, but because we dare not  
doe them, therefore they are hard.

(b) Non quia  
difficilia qua-  
dam sunt, ideo  
non audemus,  
sed quia non  
audemus, ideo  
difficilia.

Exhortation to the  
holy spirit of God: Golden  
to regaine and receiue  
contemplation: where  
our bodies are made  
into his spirit: that many  
the tragest order of  
to him, as to an officer  
counsell and aduocation they obeyed,  
as to a diuine oracle.  
Vnto the count of R. A. S. A. S.  
A noble nobile, came to visit him.  
And



CHAP. V.

*Of his great puritie, and humilitie.*

**T**HE man of God increasinge in his rigorous penance, did not only mortifie in part, but wholly subdued his passions, and made his senses subordinate to the rule of reason, he suffered nothings to enter into his soule, which might separate, or in the least kinde withdrawe his affectiō from his beloued spoule, for (as much as was possible for pilgrime man) he enioyed the spirit of God; golden peace and diuine consolation satt vpon his winges of contemplation, and where others make their bodies masters, he made his a slaue vnto his spirit. Hence it came to pass, that many of both sexe, drawne with the fragrant odour of his vertues, flocked to him, as to an other Apostle, to whose counsells and admonitions they obeyed, as to a diuine oracle.

Vpon a time the count ORAPSANE a deuout nobleman, came to visit him.  
And

*of blessed Alcantara.*

And fallinge into discourse, how much God almightie was moued with the sins of the world, out of his zeale breaketh into these speeches. O Father! what doe you thinke? what will be come of this wicked world? doe you thinke the diuine iustice, can containe it selfe any longer from reuenge? behold howe vertue is opprested, and sin triumpheth? how wilfully doe we hoarde vp anger against the day of anger? to which the man of God modestly answered and sayed, noble Sir, doe not afflict your selfe, a remedy will easily be found to cure this disease, the point of the difficultie consisteth only in you and me, for the generall perdition of mankind, floweth from this fountaine, that all and euery one dissemblinge or cloakinge their owne sins, accuse the wholl, when the wholl can not be said to sin at all, but particular persons in the wholl. Wherefore men crye out against the wickednesse of the word, that all are naught, and none that doe good, when if they would but looke into their owne particular, they should finde matter enough of sorrowe, and to moue them selues to doe penance for their owne faults: but nowe because they blame the

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wholl,

*The life*

wholl, they neglect their owne particulars, and iustifie themselves with a foolish presumption. Therfore, noble Sir, let your Lordship , and I mend one a peece , and then a great part of the world wilbe amended, we shall appease the angry iudge , and repaire a great part of the ruine of mankinde by our good example.

When CHARLES the fifth recollected himselfe in a certaine monasterie of the HIERONYMITES, vnderstandinge of the sanctitie and integrety of this holy Father , he sent for him, with an intent to make him his ghostly Father. But he hūbly refusinge so great an honour, alleaged some reasons, why he thought this employment not to be fittinge for him. At which deniall the Emperour beinge a little moued , with anger, saied, we charge you, Father, that you would take care of our soule. He seeinge this suddaine alteration of CESAR, fell downe at the feete of his maiestie, and earnestly desired him, to differre the busines to what day or houre he would please to appoint, that in the meane time he might comend it to God almighty; which the Emperour graunted, then he tooke his leaue of the Emperour,



*of blessed Alcantara.*

perour, and saied, this renowned C  
S A R, shalbe a signe vnto you, that it is  
not accordinge to God almighties will,  
which you haue desired, if I doe not re-  
tourne at the appointed time. Then pas-  
singe to his former solitude, as he went,  
he complained with many sighes and  
groanes, to God almightie, fearinge by  
the diuises of Sattan, to be drawne from  
the embrasings of his beloued spouse  
C H R I S T I E S V S. He sent vp his fer-  
uēt prayers to the almightie throne, and  
saied these like wordes: Lord, I haue  
not therfore left the world, and bet-  
ken my selfe to this holy desert, that  
now at length my name should be re-  
nowned in a Princes court, and liue  
in honour, that am a poore F R A N-  
C I S C A N F R Y A R. Why should  
my cares be troubled with the flatter-  
inges of courtiers, who came to spea-  
ke my fault in religion? I confesse that  
this office may be exercised without  
finne, but whether it be expedient  
for my soule, sweet I E S V S, tell me?  
and when he entered into his cell.  
Lord, I beseech thee pull me not from  
hence, whether thy omnipotent hand  
hath brought me. Here I am safe, here  
I am rich, because I enioy thee.

*The life*

alone canst satiate my soule. Alas! without thee what is the wholl empire? and with thee this poore cell, is a Kingdome of contēt. Here let me liue: Here let me die. Lord let it please thee, what I wish for, because all is thine, what soeuer I desire. If thou grantest, me my petition, let this be a signe vnto me, that C E S A R, molesteth me no more. So risinge, as beinge heard, did appeare no more before him. Neither did the Emperour euer solícite him after.

The same request did the illustrious Princeſſe I O H A N N A, sister to P H I L I P the second, Catholique Kinge of *Spaine*, make vnto this holy Father, whome he likewise denied after the same manner. Thus whilest he fled honours, he was most honoured of all, and reuerenced of euery one.

And what candide synceritie he vsed, in contemninge proffered honours, men of no small qualitie obserued, that those who honoured him, he would no more regard their speech then a simple ideot, and would labour to diuert them from that, to some other discourse. He had rather be called a sinner then a holy man, and he himselfe would (but without scandall) lay open to the world his im-





THE LIFE OF  
**CHAP. VI.**

*Of his fervent prayers and raptures,  
 & of his spirit of prophesie.*

**G**OD almightie was alwayes present with him, and he with God. His soule was like a fyerie furnace, made hote with the fuell of the crosse of CHRIST. It was not in his owne power, to containe himselfe, but what thinge soeuer he either sawe, or heard, which might delight his beloued IESVS, though it were but a farr of, his heart-strugges would beginne to reble, and his vitall spirits leave him, and frequently fall into extasie. He was accustomed for a wholl houre together, to say his prayers with his armes stretched out in manner of a crosse, fightinge and weeping, till at last he would be besides himselfe, eleuated from the ground, and vnited only to his God. He was oftentimes in this manner rapt, when he was in the chure at mattins. But his deuotion was much more augmented at the autler, when he celebrated the dreadfull sacrifice,

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fice, then would rivers of teares gush in  
abundance from his venerable eyes, that  
would moue the most stonie and obdu-  
rate heart of any of the standers by, vnto  
compunction. After masse he would  
withdrowe himselfe into his cell, where  
he hath beene often heard to haue had  
greuious conflicts with deuils; who of-  
tentimes appearinge in a visible shape,  
would followe him vp and downe with  
a terrible furie.

In talkinge of God almightie, his  
soule would be presently inebriated  
with diuine sweetnes, and ascendinge by  
degrees from one word to an other, as,  
what was God incarnated for me? was  
God made man for me? was God vested  
with humane flesh for me? and the like.  
He would forthwith breake into excla-  
mations, and hurryinge himselfe into his  
cell, would for the space of aboute three  
howers together, loose the vse of his  
senses. (a) One day, a brother, that was  
newely made Priest, practisinge in the  
garden to singe masse, when he heard  
him singe these wordes of S. Iohnes  
gospell, (*Et Verbum caro factum est.*) He  
was eleuated into the aire two cubits  
high, and flew through fower doores  
with the violence of this motion, at  
length

(a) *Marianus*  
*in vita S. Al-*  
*canti. cap. 10.*

*The life*

length settinge himselſe vpon his knees  
before the blessed Sacrament for a longe  
space together remained in extaſie.

This therfore vvas ordinarie to the  
freind of God, that vwhen he heard any  
thinge of the humanitie of our blessed  
Sauour, or any deuout vvord of the ho-  
ly Scripture, it vvould cauſe him raptu-  
res. Neither could he help them, though  
he did ſtrive much againſt them, eſpe-  
cially in the preſence of others; but his  
heart vvould become like meltinge vvar  
in the middeſt of his bovvells. He vvas  
often in ſeing the Crucifix, moued  
vvith ſuch compaſſion that his armes &  
croſs vvould be rapt, vvith little cloudes  
glitteringe about his heade.

He would ſome times prophesie, to  
ſome the loſſe of honours, to others ſud-  
den death, to other purgatorie. Which  
would fall out the verie day and howe  
he told them.

The firſt time he ſawe S. TERE-  
ſA he told her what contradictions  
and afflictions ſhe ſuffered from her  
ghoſtly Fathers, and other ſpiritual  
perſons, who would needs perſwade  
her, that ſhe was ſeduced. And more-  
ouer, that ſhe was to ſuffer much  
more, in the ſame kinde. He likewiſe  
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*Indies.*

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## CHAP. VII.

### *Of his patience.*

**H**E traced the steps of our blessed Sauour, and all his glorious Saints, (a) all vvhich did neuer merit their crownes vvithout carryinge of the cross of CHRIST.

(a) *Quis sanctorum sine patientia coronatus fuit, in deliciis Salomon fuit, & ideo fortasse corrui. Dia. Hieron.*

He vvvas an other patient IOB, in sufferinge the temptatiōs and afflictiōs, the infirmitie of man is subiect vnto, he vvvas in a particulare manner loadē vvith the heauie burthen of them, not vvithstandinge his seruant spirit, patiently supported, and victoriously triumphed ouer all his difficulties mauger all the force of Sathan. His frequent combates, his persecutions, his sicknes, his longe and tedious trauels, the difficulties he did vndergoe in erectinge his prouince, vvould take vp too much time to relate. He vvvas so greedie of sufferinge, that he esteemed himselfe happie, to  
here

*The life*

bare afflictions for the name of IESVS,  
sayinge, that there vvas no vway so sure  
and easie to attaine vnto perfection, as  
the carryinge of the crosse of CHRIST.  
He vvould therfore begge of God al-  
mightie that he might neuer be vvith-  
out some affliction. Thus did our coura-  
gious champion trample vpon all his  
enemies. (b) He kicked the *Asse* and  
*Basiliske*, he vvalked vpon the *Lion* and  
the *Draggon*, vyhilest he vanguished all  
his foes, not so much by resistinge, as by  
sufferinge.

(b) *Psal.* 90.



CHAP.

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## CHAP. VIII.

*Of his charitie towards his  
neighbour.*

**H**I s charitie towards his neighbour vvas vnspeakable, for this cause he ofte visited hospitalls to serue the sick, assistinge them both spirituallly and corporallly, and oftentimes miraculously restoringe them to their former health. After he had made an end of his deuotions, the residue of his time he spent, in comfortinge the afflicted, in cherishing the feable, and finally in any thinge he could imagine; might comfort his neighbours, either corporally or spirituallly, so that innumerable people of all conditions, and sexes continually flocked vnto him for his charitable assistance.



d

CHAP.



CHAP. IX.

Of his pouertie.

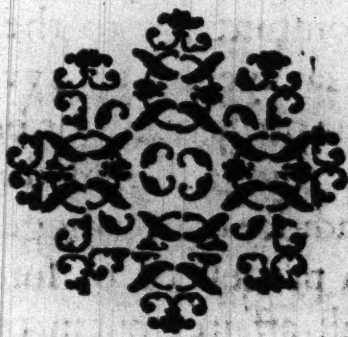
(2) S. Francis non solum pauper-  
satis commo-  
dis libentissi-  
me fruebatur,  
sed etiam ita  
honorabat &  
colebat, quasi  
rem eximiam  
& cui nulla  
humana di-  
gnitas posset  
cōparari. Itaq;  
vt D. Bonau.  
scribit, eam in  
omni sermone  
modò Matrē,  
modò Sponsā,  
modò Domi-  
nam appella-  
bat, saepe etiā  
Reginam, pro-  
pterea quod in  
rege regum  
eiusque geni-  
trice, adeo in-  
signiter efful-  
sisset. Hieron.  
Platus de bo-  
no stat. relig.  
lib. 2. cap. 3.

**H**E vvas a rigid obseruer of ho-  
ly pouertie, vvhich in immita-  
tion of his patron (a) S. FRAN-  
CIS, he not only loued, but honoured so  
farr that he vvas vvont to call it the  
Euangelicall pearle, vvhervvith he en-  
riched his newve erected prouince, in  
that lustre as the obseruance vvas in the  
infancie of our Seraphicall Order, from  
vvhich time, and by vvhole example,  
most prouinces through the Christian  
vvorld haue excelled in this particu-  
lare point, as much as in their former  
splendour. He permitted his brethe-  
ren to haue nothings in their cells but  
of mere necessitie, and to the preachers  
he permitted them no more but tyyo  
or three bookes, vvith the Bible and a  
crucifix.

He vvas vpon a time asked by S.  
THERESIA vvhither or no she  
should found her Monasteries vvith  
rentes and yearely reuenues, to vvhich  
diuerse

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diuerſe perſons of qualitie had aduiſed her. He anſwered, that it vvas an iniurie to God the authour of Euangelicall counſells, to aſke the aduiſe of men touchinge the obſeruance of them, or to doubt vvither or no they vv ere obſervable. And vvith all encouraged her to be conſtant in that ſervant deſire, ſhe had begun in embracing holy povertie. To vvhoſe counſell ſhe vvillingly obeyed. And after our Lord appeared to her in prayer, and declared, that it vvas his vvill that her Monafteries ſhould be founded in holy poverty. His letter to her I thinke it not amiſſe to ſet dovvne at large, vvich followveth.



d. 2

*A letter,*

*A letter of the blessed Father  
FR. PETER DE AL-  
CANTARA, to the holy  
Mother THERESA OF  
IESVS, who demanded his  
counsell, whither she should  
founde her Monasteries with  
rents or no.*

**T**HE holy Ghost giue you his  
grace and loue, &c. I receiued  
yours, deliuered me by DON  
GONZALES D'ARANDA. And am  
amazed, consideringe your zeale, and  
pietie: in committinge to the direction  
of learned lavvyers, that vvhich is no  
vvayes their profession, or belonginge  
vnto them; you should doe vvell to  
take their aduice concerninge the deci-  
dinge of a proceſs or of lutes in lavv,  
and téporall affaires, but in that vvhich  
concerns perfeccion of life, vve ought  
to treat only vvith those vvho practise  
the ſame. For ſuch as the conſcience of  
euery one is, ſuch are his exerciſes and

vvor



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vvorkes. Concerninge the Euangelicall counsells, may I demand vvhither they be obseruable or noe? For that the counsells of God cannot be but good, neither can the obseruance therof seeme difficult, vnless to those, vvho gouerne themselues accordinge to humane prudence, hauinge les confidence in God then they ought. For he, vvho hath giuen the counsell, vvill consequently giue force and meanes to accomplish the same. And if your zeale and seruour dravve you to embrace the counsells of CHRIST IESVS, obserue them vvith the greatest integritie, and perfection that possible you can: seeinge they were equally giuen to both sexes. It can not be, but the same meritt and reward will be rendered vnto you, as to others that haue truly obserued them. And if there be scene any want or necessitie in the Monasteries of poore Religious Women, it is because they are poore against their wills, and not through faulte of their vowe of pouertie, or followinge of the Euangelicall counsells. For I accoumt not much of their simple pouertie, but of their patient sufferance of the same for the lone of God. But I more esteeme of that pouertie

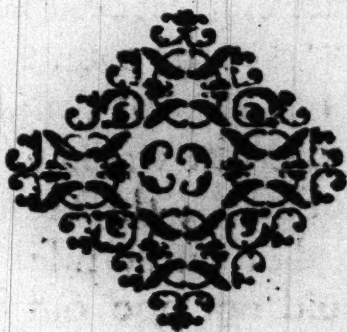
*The life*

which is desired, procured, and embraced for the same loue. And if I should thinke or otherwise determinatly beleue, I should not hold my selfe a good Catholique. I beleue in this, and in all other thinges taught by our blessed Sauour, and that his counsell is good and profitable, as proceedinge from God, and though they oblige not to sinne, they binde neuertheless that man to be more perfect that followeth them, then if he had not vndertaken them at all. I hold them poore in spirit, which are poore in will, as our Sauour hath saied, and my selfe proued; howbeit I beleue more from God then of myne owne experience, that those, who by the grace of God, are with all their hearts poore, leade a life most happie as confidinge and hoping in him alone. His diuine Maiestie giue you light to vnderstand this truth, and to practise the same. Beleue not those that shall tell you the contrarie, for want of light and vnderstandinge, or for not hauinge tasted, how sweet our Lord is to those, that feare and loue him, renouncinge for his sake all vnnecessarie thinges of this world, for they are enemies of the Crosse of CHRIST, not beleeuinge the

*of blessed Alcantara.*

the glorie which accompanieth the same. I also pray our Lord to giue you this light, that you be not wantinge in the beleife of this truth, so much manifested. And that you take not counsell, but of the followers of CHRIST IESVS. Although others thinke it sufficient if they obserue the thinges they are bound vnto, yet they haue not alwayes greater vertue and perfection by their worke. And though the counsell bee good, yet that of our blessed Sauour is much better. Who knowes what he counselleth and giueth grace to accomplish the same: and in the end reward to those who hope in him and not in rents and goods of the earth.

*From Auila this 14. of April 1562.*





CHAP. X.

*Of his confidence in God almighties  
prouidence.*

**H**Is admirable confidence in God almighties prouidēce, did accompanie his rigid and Euāgelicall pouertie, and it oftentimes miraculouſly appeared both at home and abroad.

(a) *Marianus  
in eius vita.  
cap. 6.*

(b) *Ea est iti-  
neris ad eum  
ob loci solitu-  
dinem, atque  
viarū anfra-  
ctus difficul-  
tas, ut vix  
accolis atque  
assuetis pa-  
teat. Conſe-  
3. parte Chrō.  
ord. S. Franc.  
in prou. ſancti  
Iosephi.*

(a) He liued ſome times in the con-  
uent of *Sancta Maria de Roſario*, which is  
ſituated in a woody place, by the riuer  
*Tentairis*, ſix Italian miles remote from  
any companie, at all times it was hard  
to come vnto by reaſon (b) the way is  
very ſteepe and crooked, neuertheleſs  
it was a place of great deuotiō, whether  
the inhabitāts of the country did much  
reſort; but now by reaſon of a great  
ſnowe, the like was not ſcene in the  
memorie of man; the Monafterie was  
ſo inuironed on euery ſide, that the  
Fryars could not goe out to get their  
viſtualls, neither could any come to  
them to bringe prouiſion. They cried to  
heauen

*of blessed Alcantara.*

heauen to the Father of the poore, that beinge destitute of all humane aide, he only out of his infinite mercie would be pleased not to forsake them. The holy Father desired them to goe into the church, and settinge themselues vpon their knees, before the blessed Sacrament, to pray to God that he would put a remedy to their hard affliction. He with great confidēce animated his Bretheren, sayinge: Be courageous, Bretheren, God almightie will not be longe, he will come without delay. He had no sooner vttered these wordes, but an other most violent storme of snowe fell so fast, that frustrated their hopes of all humane assistance. But he that conteineth not his anger longe, did not delay to comfort his afflicted childeren. Behold! a little space after the storme was ouer, the porter heard the bell of the gate of the conuent to ringe, he went to open the dore, but espied no bodie; he returned back againe, thinking it to be the winde, that had stirred the bell, or that his fancie seemed to heare the noise when he heard it not; checkinge himselfe with foolishnes, that he could imagine, that it was possible for any to come to the conuēt in so deepe a snowe.

Whi-

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Whilest he was thus discourfinge with himselfe, it range againe so hard that all heard it, notwithstandinge it was a great winde. Then retourninge againe to the gate, and openinge it, he found a basket filled full of newe white bread, he looked about to see if he could espy any body, but no creature appeared, for it was a deepe snowe, where the footinge of any person could not but appeare. He left the basket, and with ioy ran backe into the conuent, to carry the good newes vnto the Fryars; who would not beleeeue, vntill the holy Father, commaunded all the Brothers, to goe in manner of processio, to see what God almightie had done for his seruantes: When they came, they found all true, as the porter had related to the. But their benefactour did no where visibly appeare. They carried the basket in, and after thankesgiuinge refreshed themselues, with the bread which the Father of heauen had miraculously bestowed vpon them. Vpon which they liued many dayes, vntill the extremity of the season, was past and that they could goe out to begg almes accordinge to their custome.



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(c) An other time trauailinge in the (c) *Madrigal*  
extremitie of the heate of summer, vpon *ibidem cap. 7.*  
the mountaine vulgarly called *Siera Morena*, he, with his companion grewe so faint, for wāt of some thinge, to quench their thirst, that they were ready to sinke vnder the burthē of their tedious iourney. He said vnto his companion: Brother, let vs betake our selues to prayer the only remedie, to incline the God of mercie to take compassion vpon our miserie. Whilst they were vpon their knees at their prayers, from a thicket came runninge out a mad bull, who made towards them amaine, they seeing themselues in this great danger of their liues, betooke themselues to flight, but the bull persued them ouer hedge and ditch, hard at their heeles, till at last he forced them to a place, where was a fountaine of water, when they came in sight of that, the bull forgettinge his former fury, stode still like an innocent lambe, he breathed himselfe a while, and went an other way. But they admiringe this great miracle of the omnipotent, that sendeth his willd beasts to teach the poore, refreshed themselues and went on their iourney with alacrity, their soules more  
com-

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comforted with this vnexpected benefit of God almighties prouidence, then their bodies strengthened with the water which they drunk for their sustenance.

(d) *Marianus*  
*ibidem.*

(d) Hauinge occation to goe from *De las Lucuas* to *Del Pico*: as he was in his iournie it began to snowe, which fell so fast that it was not possible for him to goe forward or backward, so that he was enforced to remaine the wholl night in that extremitie of cold and snowe. But the feruour of his deuotion, wherwith he implored the diuine assistance, caused him to pass ouer the night without tediousnes. But that which was more admirable. Behold! in the morninge when it was day, one might see, that the snowe did not so much as touch or wett him, but it congeled ouer his heade in a miraculouse māner like a canopie, and of each side too wales of snowe frozen in a curious manner, defended him from the iniurie of the weather, as though he had bene shutt in a beautifull chamber.

These fewe miracles I haue set downe collect out of many, which God almightie hath bene pleased to worke by the meanes of his glorious seruant.

(e) As

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(e) As testimonies, not only of many singular prerogatives of graces exhibited to this holy Father in his owne particular. But also that we admire these straunge and vnaccustomed manner of God almighties proceedings with this blessed man, the truth wherof being confirmed by many approved authours. May be incited to immitate his vertues whome God hath honowred with the grace of workinge miracles.

(c) *Miraculū  
voco quicquid  
ardū aut in-  
solitū supra  
spē vel facul-  
tatē mirantis  
apparet, qua-  
dam admira-  
tionē faciunt,  
quedam gra-  
tiam magnam  
benevolentia-  
que conciliat  
Aug. de util.  
cred. prope fi-  
nem*

CHAP.

If thou shouldest obiekt vvith Calvin *in prefat. instit.* that the miracles of our Sainctes in the Catholique Church, are partly fained, partly diabolicall. I answer, that the same thinge the Pharisees objected to our blessed Sauour, that he cast out deuils in Beelzebub the prince of the deuils. More ouer it is most deuilish to blemish the integritie of the ancient Fathers and Sainctes, vvith such an impudent and foule aspersiō, as those vvho vvrote the liues of other Sainctes, as Nycenus of Taumaturgus, S. Athenasius and S. Hierom, of S. Anthonie, Seuerus of S. Martine, S. Gregorie of S. Benet, S. Bernard of S. Malachias, S. Bonauenture of S. Francis. VVhose authoritie if vve should deny no faith or credit is to be giuen to any historie in the vvorld. VVhich absurditie none, but men out of their vvitts, or blinded vvith malice, vvill admit. S. Augustine confirmeth vvhat I say. His vvordes be these: *Ad alios aliquis ista falsa esse miracula; nec fuisse falsa sed mendaciter scripta, quisquis hoc dicit, si de his rebus negat, amano vllis literis esse credendum, potest etiā dicere nec Deos vllos curare mortalia. De ciuit. Dei l. 10. c. 18. Quodā falsa non nisi à proteruentibus negari possunt, vt sunt miracula falsa à Syluestro cum Constantino tam in curatione leprae eius, quā in disputatione eius contra Iudeos: quae facta tanquā celeberrima mundi non latuerunt. Scot. in prol. q. 2. n. 11.*



CHAP. XI.

Of his knowledg in holy Scripture,  
and of his preachinge.

(a) o quam  
velox est ser-  
mo sapientie,  
et ubi Deus  
magister est,  
quancitā dis-  
citur quod de-  
tetur. B. L.  
per 1. de Pe  
100 ps.

**H**E was so well versed in the  
holy Scripture , that for the  
most part , he could repeate it  
without booke, and in explicatinge it,  
he was so cleare, and with all so mo-  
uinge that one might iudge his lear-  
ninge , to be rather supernaturally  
infused in prayer, then naturally got-  
ten , by the ordinarie meanes of  
studie (a) for he quickly learned what  
he was taught seeinge he had the holy  
Ghost for his master. He wrote some  
spirituall workes , wherin he had a  
speciall gift of God almightie, both  
to direct those who tend vnto per-  
fection , in their iourney towards  
heauen, as also to inflame their wills  
to aspire to that eternall good. In  
this particulare science, he was cheifly  
eminent and wrote profitable and  
learned tractes of this matter.

He

*of blessed Alcantara.*

He had such a rare gift in preaching: so inuective against sinne, and withall so comfortable, to those who were pullinge their feete out of the snare of vices, that God almighty was pleased to worke by his meanes, many wonderfull effects in the soules of his auditory.

In the city of *Abula* there was a young gentleman, that was giuen vnto, and as it were buried in all the sportes and vanities of this wicked world. But especially in the vild and pernicious loue of wanton womē. Cominge in his pompe vpo a festiuall day of that place, by chaunce mett the holy Father, who when he vnderstood of his corriuals the qualitie and sanctity of him, went towardes him with others to salute him with great respect, and withall begged his prayers, but God knoweth, with what intention, for he still obstinately remained in his filthy desires. But the holy Father in his sermon touched the soare of his soule vnto the quick (yet not reuealinge any person) in so much, that the holy Ghost did so worke with him, that this prodigall child vnderstandinge the Father was to goe away from that place, the next day, made

### *The life*

( b ) The  
younge mā  
out of hu-  
mility ma-  
nifested  
his sins to  
the holy Fa-  
ther out of  
the Sacra-  
ment of  
confession.

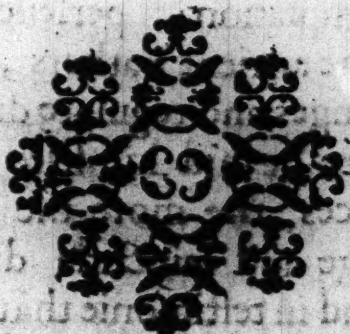
made hast, to gett pen and inke to write  
his sins, the next day cometh to the Fa-  
ther , and saluteth him, giuinge him a  
longe (b) scroule of his sinfull life , and  
desireth him for the loue of God , that  
he would vouchsafe to pray for him,  
that God would haue mercie vpon his  
soule , and that he would not punish  
him for euer accordinge vnto his deser-  
tes. The holy Father receiued his pa-  
per, and promised that he would pray  
for him. So each departed their way.  
But he had scarce turned his backe, but  
the Father earnestly begged of God al-  
mightie his conuersion , of which he  
was presently sensible : for before he  
came home, the spirit of God did so in-  
flame him , that he abiured his former  
conuersation , and loathed the plea-  
sures, that before he loued so much,  
and beinge retourned to his house,  
flunge off his braue cloathes, toare  
his chaine from his neck, and vested  
himselke in meane and country cloa-  
thes , without any shame appearinge  
so to all the world, all admiringe the  
suddaine chaunge of the right hand  
of the highest ; and as afterward he li-  
ued well, perseueringe to the end, so  
he dyed happily ; he dispersed his patri-  
monie,



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monie amongst the poore , and built many monasteries and hospitalls , as testimonies of his conuersion.

He had such efficacy in his preaching , that many common Women, drawne with the sweetnes of his spirit, chaunged their fordid and base manner of liuinge into holy and pious conuersation. Others as well of the nobility, as amongst the meaner sort of people, renouncing all pleasures for the loue of I E S V S , shrowded themselves in cloisters, where they might be secure from the contagion of worldly vanities. And many consecratinge their virginie to their celestiaall spouse, like lillies amongst thornes, perseuered in the open world amidst the dangers therof, with immoueable constancie.



**CHAP.**

## CHAP. XII.

*Of his religious zeale and of  
his death.*

**T**HE Reverend esteeme of his  
vertues encreased so much, even  
in his owne Cloister, that there  
many times (enioyned by obedience)  
performing the office of Guardian with  
great integrity, was at length by the  
suffrages of all the Fathers, elected  
twice Prouinciall of the prouince of  
S. GABRIEL, where he made a hap-  
pie and notable reformation. But after  
his three yeares expired, he betooke  
himselſe againe to his poore heremi-  
tage, where he fasted his soule with sa-  
cred contemplation, perseueringe in  
readinge the ancient Fathers, watch-  
inges, fastinges, and regulare discipline.  
But the more he hid himselſe in these  
obscure places, the more the fame of  
his learninge and sanctitie did shine  
abroade. And in testimonie that God al-  
mightie would not haue this resplendat  
light, to be put vnder a bushell, but to be

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be set vpon a candlestick, to giue light to others, to followe his glorious footsteppes, and to the end, that he might not only enrich his owne soule with the treasures of vertue, but also instruct others, both by his doctrine and example, to aspire to heaven, the sea Apostolique did vouchsafe to honour him with a commission, by vertue of which, he should erect, and founde a newe province vnder the title of S. I O S E P H. Which before his death, he was so happy to see, not only multiplied in number of conuentes, and religious men (by his great labour and trauaile) but also to be perfectly established in regulare obseruance, and true monasticall discipline.

At last, the number of his meritts beinge compleat, his iust master, whom he had serued so longe with great fidelitie, was pleased to call him, to reward his labours with an eternall crowne of glorie, and to reape in ioy what he had sowed in teares. He fell sick in the Conuent of S. ANDREVVE DE MONTE ARENO, where God almightie vouchsafed to let him knowe the hower of his death. And before his departure he called his bretheren, exhortinge



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tinge them to perseuerance in that happy course, which they had vnderaken for the loue of God, and the sauinge of their owne soules. He the receiued vpon his knees with aboundance of teares the sacred *Viaticum* with singulare deuotion, and a little after, his infirmitie increasinge, he receiued also the Sacrament of extreame Vnction. The blessed Virgin and S. I O H N (to whome all his life time he was verie much deuout) appeared to him, and gaue him assurance of his saluation. Which euer-comfortable newes, he no sooner vnderstood, but his heart was rauished with ioy, and his mouth filled with gladnes, and out of that aboundance of content breaketh out into these wordes of the Prophet

(a) *Psal.* 112. D A V I D: (a) *Letatus sum in his que dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus:* I haue reioyced in those thinges that are saied vnto me: we will goe into the house of our Lord. In fine the happie hower beinge come, he yealded his blessed soule into the handes of his maker, and by the passage of a temporall death, traualled to an eternall life the 18. of October, vpon the feast of S. L V K E 1562. the 63. yeare of his age, and the 47. of his entrance into holy Religion.  
His

of blessed Alcantara.

His body after his death became more  
 beautiful, shininge with great claritie,  
 and sendinge fourth sweete odours. The  
 people from all partes flocked to be-  
 hold this sacred spectacle, and greedie  
 after so rich a prey, clipped peeces of his  
 habite, which they conserued as holy  
 reliques. His bodie was no sooner in the  
 graue, but his sepulchre began to be re-  
 noured with many (b) miracles which  
 for breuity sake I omit to speake of be-  
 cause I would not be too tedious to the  
 deuout reader.

(b) Cum puer-  
 ulus / Esiops  
 inuicilis peni-  
 tas a quo can-  
 trahtus ad il-  
 lius sepulcrum  
 ab eius herede  
 vxore quon-  
 dam Martini  
 de Friars ac  
 prefati oppidi  
 Artenuarum  
 accola, eddu-  
 ctus esset eius  
 meritis. Quo-  
 opt. max. id  
 operis in te-  
 cinfide oppidi

gre sospitati restituitur. Et Leonora Gonsalua  
 inquilina à paralisi qua grauissime laborabat ad eius quogue sepul-  
 crum liberatur. Franc. Gonzaga 3. parte Chron. ordinis Seraphici.  
 Vide plura apud Ioannem de sancta Maria in vita B. Alcant. c. 30.

(c) His soule was no sooner out of  
 his body, but presently he appeared to  
 S. TERESIA, to bringe vnto her  
 the ioyfull tidings of his receiuinge in-  
 to heauen. Many times after he appea-  
 red to her, and once amongst the rest  
 he saied vnto her: O HAPPY PE-  
 NANCE THAT (d) DE-  
 SERVED SVCH A GLO-  
 RIOUS RECOMPENCE!

(c) In eius  
 vita cap. 27.  
 (d) Opera  
 sua non habent  
 bonitatem me-  
 ritoria gloria  
 ex sua natu-  
 ra, nec a nobis  
 sed à Deo.

For our  
 vvorkes are  
 to be take-  
 nin, a too-  
 feld respect.

c 3

(e) Hap-

1. As they are in ther proper nature & dignity. 2. As they  
 have Gods promise & acceptance. If vve consider them  
 in the first sence, lo they doe not merite, saluation: if in  
 the secod, they doe. This I say, to ansvvere the obiection

## The life

of ignorant protestantes, vvhich might take occasion to carpe at this vword (deserued) and vvhich likewise thinke that vve so dignifie our vvorke that thereby vve thinke to merite heauen, abstractinge from the merites of our blessed Sauours passion vvhich is certaine, our doctrine is, that the

(e) Happie indeede was his penance, that chaüged sorrowes into pleasures mourning into mirth: teares into ioyes, and a momentarie crosse into an eternall crowne. The same blessed THERESIA (as we haue said before) affirmed, that she receiued more comfort, and consolation from him after his death, then in time of his life. And that his soule flewe immediately to heauen, without any passage by purgatorie. All these thinges beinge well examined, and verified, by persons, without all exceptiō, worthy of credit, his holines, for the glorie of God, honour of the Saint, and benefit of the faithfull, vouchsafed to pronouce him beatified: to the end, that as he had a perfect fruition of glorie, in the Church triumphant, so he should want no praise or reuerence, in the Church militant. He

was the cheifest reason of merite is founded in Gods promise, not mans vvorke, and our vvorke, so to merite, and to be ennobled, cheifly by vertue of ther principall agent our blessed Sauours passion. *Conradas Klingius de locis com l. 1. c. 35. Stapelton. controuers. l. 10. c. 12. Bellarm. l. 1. de iustificat. c. 21. & l. 5. c. 11 cum communi Doctorum.* (e) If the conuersion of sinners, and of greivous sinners, be so pleasinge to almighty God, that the Angels of heauen doe reioyce at it accordinge to S. Bernard *Supernae beatorum mansiones attingit penitentia odor (ita vt teste ipsa veritate) magnam gaudium fit inter Angelos Dei super uno peccatore penitentem agente;*



of blessed Alcantara.

was beatified the 18. of April 1622. and his office is celebrated in the Conuenter of his order the 19. of October.

F I N I S.

*cepit mox amaritudo animi penitentis. Ac velut recentium adhuc  
vulnorum dolor nimis exacerbat ac perturbat. Secura manus ve-  
stra distillans myrrha amaritudinem in salubrem hanc vultio-  
nem, quia cor contritum, & humiliatum Deus non deficiet.  
D. Bernard. super Cantica serm. 10. I say if such a conuer-  
sion be so pleasinge to God, howe glorious may yve  
iudge this holy Fathers penance to be yvho from his  
cradle to his graue, lived innocently and austerly? so  
that yve may iustly say of him as the Church of S. Iohn,  
Astra deserti teneris sub amice, cinis turmas fugiens protuli, ne  
leni saltem maculare vitam, fame posse.*

B E N E D I C T U S D E U S.

B E A -



# BEATIFICATIO

B. P.

## DE ALCANTARA.

Gregorius Papa XV. ad perpetuam rei  
memoriam.

**IN** Sede Principis Apostolorum nullis licet nostris sus-  
fragantibus meritis à Domino constituti, pijs fidelium  
que virtutibus Dominus in servis suis. bene-  
volenter, libenter annuimus, eaque favoribus prose-  
quimur, opportunitate. Cum itaque instantibus non solum clare me-  
morie Philippo III. & charissimo in Christo filio nostro Philippo  
IV. Hispaniarum Regibus Catholicis, sed etiam fere omnibus  
Hispanie regnis, venerabiles fratres nostri S.R.E. Cardinales sa-  
avis ritibus prepositi, de mandato nostro causam servi Dei Petri  
de Alcantara, Ordinis Min. strictiori observantia Discalceato-  
rum nuncupatorum, ac Provincia S. Iosephi eiusdem Ordinis Fun-  
datorum, iuxta seriem trium causarum Palatii Apostolici Audito-  
rum ad effectum canonizationis examinauerint, ac multis desuper  
habitis sessionibus, referente dilecto filio nostro Marco Antonio,  
tituli S. Eusebii Presbyteri Cardinale Gorzadino nuncupato, ple-  
nissime constare de validitate processuum, fama sanctitatis, fide,  
pietate, ceterisque virtutibus non in genere solum, sed etiam in  
specie, reliquiarum ac sepulchri veneratione, plurimisque tan-  
dem miraculis pronunciauerint, censuerintque posse nos quando-  
cumque voluerimus, eundem Dei servum, iuxta Catholicæ Ec-  
clesie ritum, Sanctum, atque in celis regnantem declarare, om-  
nibusque fidelibus solemnè canonizatione proponere venerandū.  
Prædictus vero Philippus IV. Rex, & dilecti filij Minister Ge-  
neralis, & Fratres Ordinis prædicti nobis humiliter supplicari  
fecerint,

fecerint, vt donec ad canonizationem dicti Petri deueniatur,  
idem Petrus Beatus nuncupari ac de eo tanquam de Confessore non  
Pontifice Missam ac officium vt infra celebrari & recitari respecti-  
ue possint, indulgere de benignitate Apostolica dignaremur. Nos  
supplicationibus huiusmodi inclinari de eorundem Cardinalium  
consilio, vt idem Dei seruus Petrus de Alcantara in posterum  
Beatus nuncupari atque de eo tanquam de Confessore non Pontifi-  
ce die 19. Octob. qua ipsius obitus memoria celebrabitur vbique  
terrarum ab vniuersa religione Minorum obseruantium vtrius-  
que sexus respectiue Missam celebrari atque officium recitari pos-  
sit. In oppido vero de Alcantara illius diocesis vbi natus at-  
que in altero de Arenas Abulensis diocesis vbi corpus eiusdem  
requiescere accepimus, omnibus tam regularibus quam seculari-  
bus Clericis sub ritu tamen semiduplici idem omnino liceat. Ac  
demum in Prouincia praedicta S. Iosephi, cuius autor extitit, ab  
ipsis dicti Ordinis Discalceatorum fratribus, etiam cum officio  
veluti de Patrono, officium pariter ac Missa iuxta Breuiarium  
Missalis Romani Rubricas celebrari possint, Apostolica auctorita-  
te tenore presentium perpetuo concedimus & indulgemus. Non  
obstantibus constitutionibus & ordinationibus Apostolicis, ce-  
terisque contrariis quibuscunque. Volamus autem vt presentium  
transumptis etiam impressis manu alicuius Notarii Publici sub-  
scriptis, & sigillo personae indignitate Ecclesiastica constituta  
munitis eade prorsus fides adhibeatur qua presentibus adhibero-  
tur si forent exhibiti vel ostensa. Datum Romae apud S. Petrum  
sub annulo Piscatoris die 18. Aprilis 1622. Pontificatus nostri  
anno secundo.

Copia vera desumpta ex tomo 4. Bullarum

Laertij Cherubini impresso Romae

an. 1631.

FA



F A C U L T A S  
S U P E R I O R I S .

**L**ibrum verè pium Meditationum  
B. PETRI DE ALCANTARA,  
Ordinis Fratr. Min. in linguam Angli-  
canam à religioso Patre Fr. *Egidio VVil-*  
*loughby*, eiusdem Ordinis Prouinciæ no-  
stræ Angl. filio, fideliter translatum, per  
omnia concordantem exemplari Latino  
inuenèrunt R. R. P. P. Theologi, qui-  
bus à nobis commissa fuit eiusdem exa-  
minatio, ideoque prælo dignum censui,  
ad instructionem populi Christiani, qui  
in tot controuersijs fidei, his pijs maio-  
rum nostrorum exercitijs penè destitui-  
tur. Habet insuper adiunctam vitam ip-  
sius B. PETRI è varijs authoribus à  
prædicto Patre *Egidio* collectam, de qua  
idem sit iudicium. Dat. in nostra resi-  
dentia Londini i. Aprilis 1632.

Fr. IOANNES GENINGES,  
*Minister Prouincialis.*

## APPROBATIO.

**M**editationes hæc B. PE-  
TRI DE ALCAN-  
TARA, in linguam Anglica-  
nā à Religioso Patre Fr. *Egi-  
dio Villongby*, Ordinis Mi-  
norū S. FRANCISCI tran-  
slatæ, vti & vita dicti B. Patris  
ab eodem auctore ex proba-  
tis auctoribus collecta, lucem  
videre merentur. Actum hæc  
10. Aprilis 1632.

**HENRICVS CALENVS**  
S. Theol. Licent. Archipr.  
Brux. Librorum Censor.

# ALPHABETICAL

## ERRATA.

Page.	Line.	Fault.	Corrected.
52	1	teaceth	teacheth.
12	2	iuspurations	inspirations.
17	17	haz	ah.
30	7	tumpett	trumpett.
30	24	at housand	a thousand.
32	6	theatninges	threatninges
32	30	incurnamine	incurnamint.
43	17	vworthly	worthy.
49	11	cribaret	cribraret.
80	20	meditang	meditating.
81	9	ony	my.
81	11	crucifieth	crucifie.
85	10	transgression	transgression.
131	21	the	then.
134	20	medition	meditation.
135	15	discoufe	discourse.
137	19	tutrer	turret.
141	6	often felt	often is felt.
150	25	rafter	after.

Printed by J. Sturges, at the Press of the  
 London and Westminster Churches.





A  
GOLDEN TREATISE,  
OF  
MENTAL PRAIER.

*Composed by the Reuerend & holy Father*  
FR. PETER DE ALCANTARA,  
*of the Seraphicall Order of*  
*S. Francis.*

---

CHAP. I.

**I**N this Chapter wee will briefly sett downe the fruite of prayer and meditation, that men considering the benefit of them, may be incited with a prompte and more willing mind to frequent these holy exercises.

It is most certaine, that the malice of our owne heartes, is the principall cause that hindreth vs from attaining to our beatitude

A and

and euerlasting happines, because it maketh vs flowre to godly actions, dull to vertuous exercises, and suggesteth a greater difficultie in them then there is, which if it were not, a man might vvalke wwithout any molestation in the way of vertue, and at length without labour attaine to his desired end.

**Rem. 7.** Hence it is, that the Apostle sayth: *I delight in the larve of God acording to the inward man: but I see another larve in my members repugnant to the larve of my mind, and captivateinge mee in the larve of Sinne.*

**The efficacy of deuotion.**

This therefore is the prime roote and cause of all our miseries, against which there is no remedie more conuenient, and efficacious, then deuotion, which acording to S. THOMAS, is nothing else, but a certaine promptitude and facilitie of the minde to doe well. It doth exclude from our minde this tedious difficultie, and maketh vs with alacritye applic our selves to vertuous actes. Therefore not without cause wee may rearme it spiritual food, recreatiue and heavenly deawe, a pleasant instinct and supernatural affection of the holy Ghost, which doth so roborate and transforme the hartes of men, that it doth begett in them a new gust and feeling of spiritual thinges, and on the contrary a tedious loathing of worldly vanities.

Day.

Daylye experience manifesteth this particular vnto vs. For wee see the soules of those who arise from profound and deuout prayer, to bee Strengthened with admirable resolutions, adorned with newe graces, and replenished with firme purposes of amendment of life, and frequenting pious exercises, they burne with an ardent desire of seruing and louing him with their wholl heart, whom in their prayer they found the God of all goodnes and benignitye, desiring to suffer any gricuous and burdensome crosse whatsoever it bee, yea to sheadd their blood for his sake. To conclude, prayer is a bath, an open place, a bedde of pleasure, wherein the soule re-createth and refresheth her selfe.

If you aske mee, what bee the chiefest meanes to attaine vnto this heroicall vertue of deuotion. I answere with the same Doctour, that it is gotten by serious meditation and contemplation of heauenlye thinges. For the ruminating of these in the soule, with a more attentine and profound consideration, doth begett in the will that disposition which wee call deuotion, which effectually rouzeth and pricketh a man forward to euery good worke. For this cause the exercise of prayer and meditation was frequent and familiar to men of

ni. can. 102.  
Joh. 1. 12.  
1. Joh. 1. 12.  
1. Joh. 1. 12.  
1. Joh. 1. 12.

By what  
meanes  
deuotion  
is gotten.



sanctity, as iudging it the easiest meanes to  
cōpasse deuotiō, which although it be but  
one only simple vertue, yet it disposeth  
and maketh vs fit for all others, and as it  
were with spurres pricketh vs forward to  
the performance of euery good worke.

*Benian. in  
the Med.  
of the life  
of Christi  
cap. 73.*

I call S. BONAVENTURE to witnesse what  
I say: his wordes are these. The inestima-  
ble vertue of prayer is able to obtaine all  
good, and remoue all hurtfull things. If  
thou wilt patiently endure aduersity; bee a  
man of prayer. If thou wilt overcome tri-  
bulatiō and temptatiōs, bee a mā of prayer.  
If thou wilt trāple vpō thy peruerse inclina-  
tiōs, bee a mā of prayer. If thou wilt knowe  
the deceiptes of Sathan, and auoid thē; bee  
a mā of prayer. If thou wilt liue ioyfully in  
the worke of God, and trace the way of  
labour and affliction; bee a mā of prayer. If  
thou wilt exercise thy selfe in a spiritual  
course, and not walke acording to the de-  
sires of the flesh; bee a man of prayer. If  
thou wilt put to flight thy vaine and trif-  
ling fancies; bee a man of prayer. If thou  
wilt satt thy soule with holy thoughtes,  
good desires, seruour, and deuotion; bee a  
man of prayer. If thou wilt establish thy  
heart with a manly Spirit, and constāt pur-  
pose in the seruice of God; bee a man of  
prayer. To conclude, if thou wilt roote  
out

*of Meditation.*

out vice, and bee indued with vertues, bee  
a man of prayer. In it is receaved the Vn-  
ction of the holy Ghost, which teacheth all  
thinges. Also if thou wilt clime vp to the  
toppe of contemplation, and enioye the  
sweet embracings of thy beloued sponſe,  
be a man of prayer. For by the exerciſe  
of prayer, wee come to that contemplation  
and taſte of heavenly thinges. Thou ſeeſt,  
of what great power and vertue, prayer is.  
For the Confirmation of all which, omit-  
ting the Teſtimonie of holy Scriptures, let  
this bee an euident prooffe vnto the, that  
by dayly experience, wee heare and ſee il-  
literate and ſimple perſons, to haue attained  
the forſayd and greater thinges by the  
vertue of prayer. Thus S. BONAVENTURE.

I beceech you, can there bee found a  
richer treaſure or a more fertile ſielde de-  
ſired? Heare an other Doctour no leſſe  
for Religion and ſanctitye, who vpon the  
ſame matter ſayth: By prayer the ſoule is  
cleaſed from ſinne, replenished with cha-  
rity, confirmed in fayth, roborated in,  
and reſreſhed in Spirit. Prayer eſtabliſh-  
eth the inward man, paciſieth the heart,  
knoweth the truth, conquereth tempta-  
tions, expelleth ſorrowe, reneweth the  
ſences, ſtirreth vp languishing vertue, put-  
teth to flight tepidity, and ſkoureth the

6 *Bl. Alcantara,*  
rust of vices. In prayer the quicke sparkles  
of celestial desires are incessantly sent forth  
from the burning coales of diuine loue.  
The priuiledges of prayer are rare, the pre-  
rogatives admirable. Prayer vnlocketh the  
gates of Heauen, manifesteth diuine secrets  
and alwaies findeth free accessse to the ea-  
res of God. I will adde no more, for those  
things which haue already bene sayd,  
abundantly expresse the fruites of this  
holy exercise.

---

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the matter of prayer.*

**H**A V I N G E take notice of the uti-  
lity of prayer and meditation, wee  
will nowe declare the matter  
about which meditation is to bee conuer-  
sant: for seeing it is ordained to this end,  
that the soule of him that meditateth, may  
bee excited to the feare and loue of God,  
and the keeping of his commaundemen-  
tes: the matter of meditation ought to bee  
such, as doth next dispose to this end and  
scope. And although euery creature, and  
the whole Scripture it selfe bee able to mi-  
nister

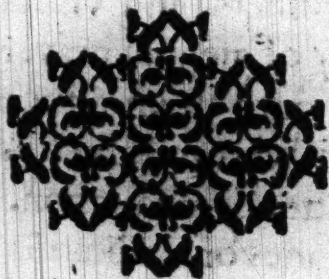


*of Meditation.*

nister this matter vnto vs, yet speaking generally, the misteries of our holy faith, contained in the *Creed*, are most efficacious and profitable to attaine vnto this end. For these on the one side, cōtaine God Almightyes benefittes, the later iudgement, the paines of hell, and the glorie of Paradise; all which, like sharpe prickes doe spurre vs on to the loue and feare of God: On the other side, they comprehend the life and Passion of our Lord and Saviour, which is the springe and fountaine of all our good. These two thinges contained in the Apostolicall *Creed*, for the most part yeilde matter of meditatiō, and therefore I thinke prayer and meditation ought chiefly to be conuersant about the, although euery one in particular may haue certaine pointes, which may more specially inflame and excite the soule to the loue and feare of God.

Being therefore perswaded with this reason, that I might the better conduct younge beginners, and vntrained soldiars into this way of mentall prayer, and that I might giue vnto them altogether prepared, and (as it were to litle children) forechowed matter of meditation, I haue selected two kindes of meditatiōs, almost takē out of the misteries of our faith, the one seruing for the morning, the other for the

euening: that as the body is comonly fedd with two meales ; soe the soule may be strenthened and nourished with two spiritual refections, by the meditation and consideration of heauenly things. Some of these are of the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, others of the misteries of our sayth, as I sayd before; But those who can not haue the opportunity, to meditate twice a day, after this manner, they may vse them, to wit; they may take to their consideration the 7. former Meditations in the one weeke, and the latter in an other weeke; or they may chiefly insist vpon those of the life and Passion of our Sauour: although the other be not to be neglected, especially in the beginning of a soules conuersion, to whom they are proper, when the feare of God, contrition and horroure of sinne, is chiefly to be regarded and sought after.



Here

Here followe the 7. former Meditations.

*A Meditation for Munday.*

**T**His day thou shalt call to memory thy sinnes, and shalt exercise thy selfe in the knowledge of thy selfe, that on the one side, thou maiest truly ponder the greatnesse of thy offences, and on the other side, thou maiest looke into thy basenes, and thy owne nothing, and acknowledge that all the good which thou hast, is from God. This consideration will gett thee submission of mind, and true humility the mother of all vertues.

First therefore waigh with thy selfe, the multitude of the sinnes of thy former life, and namely those sinnes which thou hast committed whē as yet thou wert not illuminated with the diuine splendour to know God Almightye rightly. These if thou dost examine with exquisite diligence, thou wilt finde to bee so many in number, that they will exceede the haire of thy head: for in this time thou ledest the life of a heathen, ignorant of the diuine powre, and as it were without any knowledge of his sacred Deity.

Then



Then consider how thou hast behaued thy selfe about the tennē commandemēts and the 7. deadly finnes, and thou wilt finde, that there is no precept of Almighty God, which thou hast not violated, nor any mortal sinne, into which thou hast not fallen, eyther in thought, word, or deed. After that, call to minde God Almightyes benefittes, which he hath bestowed vpon thee in the whole course of thy former life, and see whether thou canst giue a good accompte of them or no.

Tell mee I pray the, how thou hast consumed the dayes of thy infancy, thy youth and the flower of thy manly age? how hast thou employed thy 5. exteriour senses, and inward faculties of thy soule, giuen vnto thee by God, only to bee busied about his holy seruice, and the contemplation of heauenly thinges, what hast thou turned thine eyes vnto, but to beholde vanities? what haue thine eares listned after but lies and tales? what hath thy tongue vttered but murmurings, and blasphemous speeches? what hath thy tast and feeling bene delighted in, but wanton pleasures? how hast thou vsed the remedy of the holy Sacramentes, giuen vnto thee, as a singular gift? what thanksgiuing hast thou restored for soe many benefittes which he hath  
hea-

heaped vpon thee? what aactivity hast thou  
vsed to satisfie his holy inspirations? how  
hast thou spent thy health of body and na-  
turall forces? how hast thou dispensed thy  
goodes of fortune? what good vse hast  
thou made of the commodity, and prefer-  
red occasions to liue well? what care hast  
thou had of thy neighbours welfare? what  
workes of mercye, or of bountye, hast thou  
done vnto them? what wilt thou answer in  
that terrible daye of iudgement, when thou  
must render a seuerer accompte of all these  
thinges? O withered tree destinated to eter-  
nal flames, except thou doest penance! what  
excuse wilt thou then frame, when thou must  
giue an accompte of euery yeare, of euery  
month, of euery weeke, of euery daye, of  
euery moment?

Thirdly consider, those sinnes, which  
thou hast euery day committed, after God  
Almighty hath illuminated and opened  
the eyes of thy soule to meditate vpon  
heauenly thinges: and thou shalt finde  
that the old Adam hath yet borne a great  
sway in thy actions, and that sinfull roote  
to haue procreated in thee, many and per-  
uerse habits.

Diligently ponder, how vngratefull  
thou hast bene to God Almighty, how vn-  
mind-

mindfull of his benefites; how contrary thou hast behaued thy selfe against his holy inspirations, how slouthfull and remisse in his diuine seruice: in which thou scarce hast euer vsed due alacrity and diligence, or such purity of intention as it is requisite, may hast thou not serued God for worldly respectes and commodity?

Enter into consideration how rigid thou art to thy neighbour, and how indulgent to thy selfe; how thou louest thy owne will, how thou adhearest to thy sensuality, how chary of thy honour, and of euery thing that belongeth vnto thee. Waigh well with thy selfe, how euery day thou growest more arrogant, more ambitious, more vaine, more prone to anger, more desperately bent to malice, more prone to delightes and pleasures, more mutable, more vnconstant, more propense to carnal sinnes, and a greater louer of earthly vanities. Consider thy inconstancy in good, thy indiscretion in wordes, imprudence in deedes, in heigh and difficult matters pusillanimity sometimes, and often audacious temerity.

In the fourth place, after thou hast take notice of the number and order of thy sinnes, pause vpon them a while in thy minde, and waigh euery one in the ballance of  
due



• due consideration; that thou maiest perceiue with what misery thou art on euery side environed. Which that thou maiest the better doe; consider these three circumstances in the finnes of thy former life. First against whom thou hast sinned. 2. Why thou hast sinned. 3. How thou hast sinned. Which if thou doest diligently penetrate, thou wilt finde that thou hast offended God, whose maiestie and goodnes is immense, who hath obliged man vnto him with so many benefites, as there are sandes in the sea, or drops of water in the Ocean.

Why hast thou sinned, or what violent occasiō hath enforced thee to any cryme? a litle momentary pride: a foule representation of pleasure; some smale commoditye placed in thy sight, and oftentimes, no occasion at all, but euil custome, and mere contempt of God.

But alas how hast thou sinned? with such facility, with such notable audacity, with so litle feare and conscience, yea with such security and pleasure, as though thou hadest to doe with no other then a wooden God, who regardeth not these subternary thinges, neyther vnderstandeth or seeth any thing, what is done vpon the face of the earth. Is this the honour due vnto his supreme maiesty? is this a remuneration

tion of his benefites? dost thou with  
such seruices requite his whippings, his  
buffetinges, and pretious blood sheadd  
vpon the Crosse for thy sake? o wicked  
wretch that hast offended so great a maie-  
sty, more miserable, that for so sleight a  
cause, and most deplorable, that thou art  
not sensible of thy vtter Ruine; that after  
sinne thou fearest not damnation, and so  
neglectest to doe penance.

Moreover it is very profitable, to insitt a  
while vpon this consideration, and that  
thou esteeme thy selfe nothing, and cer-  
tenly perswade thy selfe that thou hast no-  
thing of thy selfe but sinne; all other thin-  
ges to be the gistes of God Almightyes  
bounty. For it is most euident, that all our  
good, both of grace and nature doth flowe  
from him: for he is the Author of the gra-  
ce of predestination (which is the fountai-  
ne and originall of all others) of the grace  
of our vocation, of concomitant and perfe-  
cting grace, and of the grace of euera-  
sting life. What hast thou then, that thou  
canst boast of, but sinne? only this nothing  
thou canst attribute to thy selfe, all other  
things belong to God: Whence thou ma-  
iest clearly and manifestly perceave what  
he is, and what thou art, and hence come  
cture, what diffidence thou oughtest to  
haue

haue in thy selfe, and what confidence in God; to loue him, and to glorifie thy selfe in him, and not in thy selfe, but so farre as his grace doth freely operate in thee.

These thinges being digested with attentive meditation, as much as thou canst, vrge thy selfe, to a contempt of thy selfe: imagine that thou art like an emptie reede shaken with euery blast of wind, without grauity, without vertue, without constancy, without stabilitye, and finally without any thing. Thinke thy selfe to bee a *Lezard* foure dayes dead, a stincking and abhominable carcasse, swarming with vermin, so filthy that passers by are forced to stoppe their nostrils, least they smel such a nasty saueur. Beleeue me, thou hart more abhominable, before God and his holy Saintes. Thinke thy selfe vnworthy to lift vp thine eyes to Heauen; to tread vpon the earth, or that the creatures should serue thee; yea not worthy to eat bread or breath in the aire. Cast thy selfe with the sinfull woman in the Gospel, at our Blessed Saviours feete: presenting thy selfe vnto him with a confused and blushing countenance, no otherwise then the woman takē in adultery before her husband, and with inward sorrowe, and true compunction, begg pardon of thy sinnes: that for his infinite mer-



mercy and goodnes, he would vouchsafe to receiue thee againe into his fauour, and that thou maiest dwell in his howse for euer.

*A Meditation for Tvesdays.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the miseries of the life of man, out of which consideration, thou wilt take notice of worldly vanities, and learne how much the glorie of them ought to be despised; seeing they are built vpon so weake a foundation, as our fading life, whose miseries, because they be innumerable, thou shalt take but seauen of the principall for thy Meditation.

First therefore consider the shortnes of the life of man, being restrained within the limittes of threescore and ten or fourscore yeares, whatsoeuer the ouerplus be, it is but labour and sorrow, as the Prophet speaketh: Out of this time, if thou doest subtract thy infancy, which time thou liuedst rather the life of a beast, then a man; the time that thou spendest in sleepe, for then thou art deprived of the vse of reason, which only distinguisheth man from other creatures, and thou wilt finde thy life to be farre shorter then euer thou didst imagine.

gine. This time if thou doest compare with the eternity of the world to come, thou wilt find it to be lesse, then a moment. Coniecture then the foolish madnes of the louers of this worlde, who that they might enioye one only momentary pleasure of this transitory life, doe not feare to expose them selves to the losse of eternitie.

Then take to thy consideration the vncertainty of this life (which is a second miserie) for not only it is most short, but the breuitie it selfe is most vncertaine and doubtful. For who is there, that attaineth to the age of three or foure score? how many are extinguished at their very entrance into the worlde? how many perish in the flowere of their youth? You knowe not sayth CHRIST, whe your Lord is to come: whether in the first watch or 2. or 3. or in the cocke crowing. Which that thou maiest the better vnderstand, call to minde especially thy domesticke friends, and other men placed in dignity and authority, whom inexorable death hath at diuerse ages (some yonger, some older) suddenly taken out of this worlde, irritating their vaine and longe-life-promising hopes.

Ponder 4. the inconstancy and mutability of this present life, neuer continuing in one state. The dispositiō of the body often

changeth , not alwaies enioying health,  
 but subiect to frequent diseases: but if thou  
 reflect vpon the minde, thou shalt see that  
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 downe with the boisterous windes of her  
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 lastly, the instability of the goods of fortune  
 ( as they tearme them ) to how many  
 chaunces they are obnoxious, neuer suffering  
 the temporall substance to stand still  
 in one stay , therby to make men happy  
 and prosperous; but like a wheele is turned  
 vp side-downe, without any intermission.  
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 life, neuer restinge night nor day, but goeth  
 forward without ceasinge , and euery day  
 more and more wasteth it selfe , so that it  
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 and when it giueth the clearest light, the  
 sooner it approacheth vnto its end, also to  
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des his decreped age, through vncertaine  
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when it is circumscribed with in the shor-

test limits, we thinke it longe. When it is full of misery, we thinke it so happie, that there is no danger, no hazard that me will not expose themselues vnto, for the conseruation of it, yea with the losse of eternall glorie, when they doe not feare to committ those sinnes which make them vnworthie of so great felicitie.

Consider sixthly, that besides the breuitie, and other fore-mentioned conditiones, that small time wherein we liue, is subiect to innumerable miseries both spirituall and corporall. That it may well be called a torrent of teares, and oceane of infinite molestations. S. **HIEROME** reporteth how **XERXES** that potent kinge, who ouer turned mountaines, and made bridges ouer the seas, when from a high place, he beheld that infinite multitude of men, and his innumerable army, he wept, to thinke that not one of those men there present, should be aliue after a hundred yeares. And presently addinge, ô that we could but ascend vnto such a turret, to behold the wholl earth vnder our feete, then would I manifest vnto thee, the ruins of the world, nation risinge against nation, and kingdome against kingdome, some tormented, others slaine, some drowned, others led into captiuitie. Here marryinge, heer mour-

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The last of all these miseries, is death, both in respect of soule or bodie, a thinge most terrible: for in this moment the body is disrobed of all the thinges, in this world. And the soule in this point receiueth the ioyfull or fearefull sentence of eternity.

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*A Meditation for VVeddensday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate on death: the consideration of vvhich is very profitable to attaine vnto true vvisedome, to beate downe sinne; and to excite men timely to cast vp their accompts vvhich they are to make in the latter day.

Consider first the vncertainty of that howver vvherin death is to seaze vpon thee, thou knowest not the day, nor the place, nor the state vvher in it shall finde thee: only thou beleuest that thou must die, for other things thou art vvholly ignorant of; except that it oftentimes setteth vpon a man vvhen he little dreameth of it, and thinketh it to be furthest of.

Consider secondly, that greiuious separation, vvhich shall be at the point of death, not only from euery thinge of this present life, vvherin thou tookest content, but also betvvixt the soule and body, vvwhose society vvas most anciēt, most louinge and deare. If a man taketh it greiuously to be banished, to be thrust out of his natie Soile, and to be deprived of that aire vvherin he first breathed, although he should carry all his dearest thinges vvith him, how much more bitterly vvould he take that general

nerall exile, vvhetherin he must be vtained  
from all vvorlly thinges, his howse, his  
meanes, his father, his mother, his childre,  
his freinds, vncertaine vvhether he him  
selfe must goe. Then shall he be depriued  
of the light and the commerce of all hu-  
mane creatures?

If the ox vvhhen he is disioyned from  
his fellowe vwith vvhome he vvas vvont  
in the same yoake to be coupled, vwith  
bellovvinge doth expresse his sorrowe,  
vvhat sobbs, vvhat sighs vvilt thou fetch,  
vvhen thou shalt perceiue thy selfe to be  
violently pulled from these thy confede-  
rats.

Consider also that anxiety vvhervvith  
the minde of the dyinge is tormented,  
vvhen abstracted from al corporall busi-  
nes, he only thinketh vvhat shall become  
of his body, and vvhat shall betyde his sou-  
le, how his body must be cast seauen foot  
into the earth, to be eaten of vvormes; and  
vvhat vvill become of his soule, vvhere it is  
to remaine, he is altogether vncertaine:  
vvhich cogitation doth surely much trou-  
ble the minde of him that dieth, vvhen he  
certainly knowveth there is heauen or hell  
to be expected, and he at equall distance  
fro them both, neither can he tell vvhich of  
these two contraries vvill fall to his share.



An other no lesse affliction followeth, that presently he must giue a strict accōpt of all his forpassed life, to the eternal iudge, which men of great sanctity were wont to feare, when ARSENIUS in the last point of life, was seen of his disciples to weep, and treble, they asked him why he feared death he answered. *Reuera filioli, merus hic quo me videtis affici nunquam omnino à me recessit ex quo factus sum Monachus.* Indeed my childrē the feare wherwith ye see me nowe afflicted, hath neuer quite left me from the time I was first made a Monke.

Simon  
Metaph. in  
vita eius  
to. 4. apud  
Syrinm.

Then all the sinnes of a mans former life come rushinge into his memory, representinge themselues vnto him, as it were in battaile aray, to destroy him, but especially his greiuious sinnes wherein he tooke greatest delight, are continually present to his fancie, which doe so torment him that they driue him into a dangerous despaire of his saluation: and the remembrance of those pleasures, which before were gratefull, are now most bitter vnto him. That the wise man saith true: *Ne intuaris vinum quando stauescit cum splenduerit in vitro color eius ingreditur blande, & in nouissimo mordebit vt coluber, & sicut regulus venena diffundet:* Behold not wine when it waxeth yelow, when the colour thereof

Proverb.  
23.

therof shall shine in the glasse : it goeth in pleasantly, but in the end, it will bite like a snake and as a basiliske it spreads abroad his poisons.

Such a poisoned cup the enemy of mankinde presenteth to the louers of the world to drinke. Such is the liquor of the outward gilded cup of Babilon.

VVicked man seinge himselfe enuironed with so many accusers, beginneth then to feare the success of his latter iudgement, and to bewaile himselfe vvith bitter outcries, ô miserable and unhappie man that haue liued thus longe in darknes, and vvalked in the footstepps of iniquitie, vvhat shall now become of me ? if S. PAVLE saith such as a man soweth, such Gal. 6. he shall reap. I that haue sowed nothinge else but the vvorkes of the flesh, vvhat should I expect but corruption ?

If S. Iohn saith, that no vncleane thinge shall enter into that heavenly cittie, vvwhich is paved vvith burnished gold, vvhat part shall I haue therein, that am defiled vvith all kinde of luxurie.

Then followe the Sacraments of the Church, Confessiõ, Communion, extreame Vnction, vvwhich are the last helps of our holy Mother the Catholique Church, to succour his dyinge soule.

From

From all these foresaid circumstances, thou maiest gather with what anxietie, a wicked man is oppressed at the hower of his departure. Then he will wish that he had led a better life, and what great austeritie he would vse, if longer time might be permitted to him. Then would he vehemently implore the diuine assistance, but the greatnes of his infirmity, and the pang-es of death approachinge will not suffer him, which will be so great that he shall scarce be able to tourne his thoughtes vpon God.

Behold after these, the Symtomes of this last infirmitie forrūners of death, and har-bengers of thy last end, which certainly in themselues are horrible, and to the beholders terrible. The stomacke swelleth, the speech faileth, the feet beginne to die, the knees wax cold, the nostrills fall, the eies sinck, the face waxeth pale, the tongue can no longer performe its office, finally the struinge of the soule goinge out of the body, disturbeth all the senses, and leaueth them wholly without vigour.

But who is able to expresse the anguish of the soule, which is farr greater? for then it is in a mighty agonie, both in regarde of the doubtfull euent of her saluation: and of the strict accoumpt she is presently to  
make



make of the deeds of her wholl life: as also because she naturally loueth the body, she can not be separated from it but with great affliction, especially knowinge not what shall become of her.

Hauinge well contemplated the soule departing the bodie, thou must yet make two iournies more: one in accompaninge the body to the graue, the other in followinge the soule to the decidinge of her cause. And thou shalt see the euent of both. Marke therfore, the dead carcas how they prepare a windinge sheete for it. What expedition they vie to carry it out of the house. Consider the solemnity and rites wher with it is carried to the graue. Howe the bells ringe, and euery one inquire of the dead. The office of the church also, the prayers of the standers by, the dolefull tune of the church, while the body is carried to the graue and buried. The teares of freinds and kindred, and all those ceremonies which are wont to be performed about the dead.

Leauinge the bodie vnder the earth, accompany the soule passinge to a newe and vnknowne region, where she expecteth the sentence of the eternall iudge. Imagine with thy selfe that thou art present at this tribunall, and the wholl court

of

of heaven, waitinge with deepe silence, and great attention the euent and sentence of this iudgement, here must be giuen a strict accompt of all receiuinges and disbursementes. I say accompt, of thy life, of thy goods, of thy familie, of the diuine inspirations, of the meanes and occasions to liue well, and finally of the blood of IESVS CHRIST, and the vse of his Sacraments, and accordinge as his accompt is, so the sentence shall be pronounced.

*A Meditation for Thursday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the latter iudgement, to the end that thou maiest stirr vp in thy soule, two principall effects, which euery Christiā soule ought to haue, to witt, the feare of God and hatred of sinne.

Place therefore first before thine eies, howe terrible that day will be, wherein all the litigious causes of the sonnes of *Adam* shall be decided, and a finall end put to the processes of our wholl life, and what shall be ordained of those for all eternitie, shall be publickly pronounced to the veiwe of the wholl world.

This day comprehendeth in it, all the dayes of all ages, past, present, and to come. And exacteth a seuerer accompt of all the actions

actions of all men, powringe out all the fury vpon men, heaped vp together from forrepassed ages; because then the torrent of God Almightyes vengeance, shall overflowe beyonde its limits, rushinge with a greater violence, by howe much more it was the longer detained, and at once shall ouerwhelme all Iniquity from the creation of the world.

Consider secondly the dreadfull signes which shall goe before this day. For our Sauour saith: *Eruunt signa in sole & luna & stellis.* And all creatures of heauen and earth shall tremble, vnderstandinge their ruine to be at hande. Men also, as our Sauour saith, worne and withered a way perceiuinge the horrible raginge of the sea: and they themselues scarce a heares breadth distant from death. Seeinge also the mightie risings, and inundations of the water; and by these coniecturinge the calamities and miserie, these prodigious signes threatē to the world: wilbe amazed with such a horror, that they will be without life, without voyce, without colour, or human shape: they will be dead before they die, dreadinge their damnation before the sentence be pronounced, immagininge the future paine, by their present distemper. Then euerie one out of exceedinglye feare,



fear, will be so solicitous of himselfe, that he will nothinge regard others whosoeuer they be, parents, or husbands, or wifs, or freinds or companions.

Imagine thirdly, the vniuersall deluge of fire, which shall goe before this iudgment: that dreadfull noise of the rumpett, which one of the Archangels shall blowe; wherwith all the people of the wholl world shalbe sommoned together, in one place makinge their appearance before the iudgment seat: and last of all that dreadfull Maiestie; the supream iudge of the quick and dead, shall assume to him selfe vpon this tribunall.

Fourthly consider what exact accompt shall be required of euery one; Holy Ios saith: *Vere scio quod ita est quod non iustificetur homo compositus Deo. Si voluerit contendere cum eo, non poterit respondere vnum pro mille.* Indeed I knowe it is so, and that man cannot be iustified compared with God if he will contend with him he cannot answere him one for at housand. What then shall become of man when God shall beginne to handle him accordinge to rigour of his iustice? when he shall speake to his conscience inwardly?

O wicked and peruerse man, what hast thou seene in me, that out of the height of  
im-

impiety, despising me, thou shouldest  
 loyne with my enemies? I haue created  
 thee accordinge to mine owne Image and  
 likenes; I haue illuminated thee with the  
 light of faith: I haue seasoned thee in the  
 Christian faith from thy infancy: I haue re-  
 deemed thee with my owne blood; for  
 thy sake I haue fasted, watched, prayed,  
 vndergone tedious iournies, sweat blood,  
 and endured manie more miseries in the  
 course of my life; for the loue of thee, I  
 haue suffered persecutions, iniuries, blas-  
 phemies, and the verie Crosse it selfe. This  
 Crosse is my witnes, these nailes are my  
 witnesses, these woundes are my witnesses,  
 which thou seest imprinted in my handes  
 and feete; to conclude heauen and earth  
 that did behold my passion are my witnes-  
 ses. Howe I haue drawne thy soule. How  
 I haue redeemed thee with the ransome  
 of my pretious blood.

Howe hast thou esteemed this pretious  
 margarite, bought by me with an inestima-  
 ble price. O generation of vipers, why  
 hast thou cholen to serue my enemy with  
 a great deale of paine, and neglected thy  
 ductie towards me thy creatour and re-  
 deemer which thou mightst haue perfor-  
 med with a great deale of pleasure. I haue  
 called thee and thou wouldest not answere

Isai. 5.

to my vocatiō: I haue knocked at the dore of thy heart; and thou hast refused me entrance. I haue stretched my armes vpon the Crosse, and thou hast not regarded me, thou despisedst my counsell, promises and threatnings. Pronounce therefore o yee Angels, the sentence and be iudges betwixt me and my vine. *Numquid amplius aliquid facere potui vinea mea quod non feci?* What could I doe any thinge more to my vine that I haue not done?

What will the reprobate and scoffers at diuine misteries answer? they that haue hished at vertue, derided simplicitie, and obserued better the lawes of the world then of God? they that haue stopped their eares at the voyce of God? they who haue contemned his diuine inspirations? they who haue bene rebellious against his commandements, and ingratefull for his benefitts? What will those libertins say, who lettinge themselues loose to all vices, haue liued as if there were no God at all, or that he did not regarde the thinges that are done belowe? What will those say, who haue followed their comodities, gust and pleasure for a lawe. *Quid facietis in die visitationis & calamitatis de longe venientis? ad cuius confugietis auxilium? & vbi derelinquetis gloriam vestram vt non incurramine sub vinculo & carcer-*



*interfectis cadatis.* What will yee doe in the day of visitation and of calamity cominge from farr? to whose help will ye flee, and where will yea leaue your glory, that ye be not bowed vnder the bond, and fall with the slaine.

Fifely consider, that terrible sentence, which after iudgement the supreme iudge pronounceth against the wicked, which he will thunder out with such a dreadfull noyse, that at the sound thereof the eares of the standers by will ringe, as the Prophet ESAY saith: *Labia eius repleta sunt indignatione, & lingua eius quasi ignis deuorans.* His lipps are filled with indignation, and his tongue as a deuouringe fire. For what flames can be so ardent as those wordes: *Descendite a me maledicti in ignem aeternum, qui paratus est Diabolo & Angelis eius.* Goe from me o yea cursed into euerlastinge fire, prepared for the Diuill and his Angels. Every word of which sentence is full of bitter torment. For who is able to comprehend what this separation is, what curse, what fire, what society, and finally what eternity to which the wicked are adindged by force of this sentence?

Esay. 30.

## A Meditation for Fryday.

D. Bona.  
in Fas.  
cap. 3.

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the torments of hell, that duely ponderinge them, thou maiest haue a more awe of God Almightye, and a greater hatred of sinne. S. BONAVENTURE teacheth that these torments are to be considered accordinge to certaine similitudes sett downe by holy men, concerninge this matter. Wherefore it will not be beside our purpose (as the same Doctour in the same place saith) to imagine hell, a horrible confused CHAOS, a lake vnder the earth, a deepe fyery dungeon, or as a spacious citty, darke and terrible, burninge with obscure and fearfull fire; filled with waylinges, howlinges, weepinge for the inexplicable paines.

In this miserable and unhappie place are two kindes of torments, *pena sensus*, & *pena damni*, the punishment of sence, and the punishment of losse of God Almightye.

Consider that there is no outward, or inward sence of the damned, which is not afflicted with a proper torment; for as the damned in all their members and senses haue offended God, vsinge them as instruments and weapons wherby, neglectinge

King the Society and lawe of God, they serued sinne. So the diuine iustice hath ordained, that euery sence accordinge to their desert, should be tormented with a proper punishment, the wanton and lasciuious eies, shalbe tortured, with the hydious aspect of diuils. The eares which were open to lyes, detractions, and other impurities; shall ringe with vnwonted clamours, out-cries and blasphemies. The noses which were delighted with sweet odours, shalbe poysoned with an intollerable stinck. The tast which was glutted with dainty fare, shalbe tormented with intollerable hunger and thirst. The tongue which vttered detractions and murmurings, shall drinke the gall of dragons. The wanton which gaue consent to their brutish desires shalbe frozen with extreame cold and as holy Iob saith: *Ab aqua nimium transibit ad colorem nimium*: Iob 24. From the waters of snowe they shall passe to the extremity of heat.

The interiour senses also shall not want their torments, the imagination shalbe tormented with the apprehension of present paines, the memory with the callinge to minde of fore-passed pleasures, the vnderstandinge with the feare of



future greifs, the will with an incredible hatred and raginge towards God.

*In illa  
Enough.  
ubi erit  
fletus &  
stridor  
dentium.*

There as S. GREGORIE saith shalbe, intollerable cold vnquenchable fire, a neuer dyinge worme, a stinch which none is able to endure, horred darknes, greuious whippinges, vizards of diuils, confusion of sinners, and desperation of al good. Tell me I pray thee couldest thou endure on little moment the least part of al these tormentes? surely it would be very greuious, if not intollerable for thee. What the will it be to suffer this wholl inundation of euils, at one time in all thy members and senses, externall, and internall, not one or a thousand nights, but for all eternitie? What sense, what tongue, what minde of man is able to conceine or expresse these thinges?

Neither are these the greatest tormentes the damned suffer. There remaineth yet a more greuious, which the diuines doe call the punishment of losse, which consisteth in the perpetuall priuation of the beatificall vision of God and his Saintes, and of all that glorious and blessed Societic. For that is the greatest torment, that depriveth man of the most excellent good. Seeinge therefore that God is that effectuall and cheefest good of all goods, to be deprived of

of him, must needs be the greatest of all evils.

These are the generall torments of the damned; besides these, there are other particular torments, wherewith euery one accordinge to their sinnes are afflicted. The proud, the enuious, the couetous, the luxurious, and other vicious haue their peculiar torments; the measure of paine there, shall be proportionable to their pleasure here, confusion there proportionable to their glory and presumption here: pouertie and want, to plenty, hunger and thirst, to gluttonie and to former delightes.

To all these aforesaid torments, eternitie is yet to be added, which is as it were the scale and key of all the rest; for if at length, they should haue an end, they were some way tollerable. That which is restrained to a certaine time can not be so vn-sufferable, but this punishment is euerlastinge, without solace, without relaxation, without diminution; where remaineth no hope of an end of their torments, or tormentours, or themselues that suffer them, but is, as it were a perpetuall and irreuocable banishmēt, neuer to be recalled, which is a thinge of importance to be noted. That the minde may be stirred vp therby, to that sauinge feare and loue of God.

From this eternitie of torments proceedeth that great hatred wherewith they are incensed against God. Hence proceed those horrible blasphemies and curses which with their impure mouthes they raile at God, sayinge. Cursed be God which hath created vs, and hath condemned vs to an euerlasting death, which doth so oppresse and torments vs that notwithstandinge neuer killeth. Cursed be his power, which doth so greivously afflict vs. Cursed be his wisdom that hath laied open all our wickednes. Cursed be his iustice that hath exacted eternall punishment for temporall sins. Cursed be his Crosse which hath not benefited vs. Cursed be his blood that was shed; seeinge it requireth reuenge against vs. Cursed be the Mother of God, who although she be pious and propitious to all, yet notwithstandinge hath shewed herselfe to vs cruell and vnmercifull. Cursed be all the Saintes of God raininge with CHRIST, and reioycinge at our miseries.

These are the hymnes, this is that harsh melody, which the damned doe continually iarr, railing at the almighty with detested blasphemies for all eternitie.



*A Meditation for Saturday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the glory of the Saintes of God, which may more eagerly inflame thy soule, to contemne the vanities of this world, and aspire to that eternall felicitie.

To the end thou mayest get a better knowledge and gust of this inestimable glory. Consider these five things. First the excellency of the place. Secondly the ioy of that society. Thirdly the vision of God. Forthly the glory of their bodies. Fifthly the compleat perfection of all abundant good.

In the excellency of the place, take notice of the admirable and wonderfull spacioufnes of it; in approued authours thou readeſt, that the least of the fixed starrs of heauen, is bigger then the wholl earth, and some of them doe excede the earth two or three hundred times in bignes. Then cast vp thine eies to heauen and consider the innumerable multitude of them in the firmament, and thou shalt see a great deale of void space, where many more may be placed, howe cast thou then but be astonished at the greatnes of so rare a fabricke?

Then consider the beutie of that place, which no tongue is able to expresse, for if God Almighty in this place of banishment and vale of miserie, hath made many thinges of admirable and comely hue: of what great beuty, and how much odorized dost thou thinke that place to be: which God would haue to be the ordinarie seat of his glory: the Pallace of his Majesty: the mansion of the elect, and the Paradise of all pleasure.

After the beuty of the place, consider the Nobilitie of the Inhabitants, whose number, sanctity, riches, and glory, are farr beyound our imaginatiō. S. Iohn saith the multitude are so great that they are innumerable. S. DIONYSIUS affirmeth that the multitude of Angels doe farr exceed the nūber of sublunary creatures. Whom S. THOMAS followinge thinketh, that as the heavens by many degrees exceed the bignes of the earth, beinge but as it were a point of them: so proportionably the glorious Spirits, therein contained, doe surpasse all earthly thinges. VVhat can be thought more admirable? assuredly this well pondered would make a man loose himselfe in the abyffe of God Almightyes goodnes.

Yea without comparison euery one of these blessed Spirits is far more beuifull to  
the

the eie then all this visible world. O what would it be to contemplate the incomprehensible number of so rare and glorious Spirits? and to vnderstand their seuerall offices and perfections? how the Angels bringe messages? how the Archangels Minister? how the Principalities triumph? how the Powers reioyce? how the Dominations bate sway? how the Vertues shine? how the Thrones doe glitter? how the Cherubins doe illuminate? how the Seraphins doe burne with loue? and finally how all with one vnanimous consent doe prayse Almighty God.

If the conuersation and fellowship of good men be so delightfull, what pleasure will it be, to be assotiated to so great a multitude of Saintes? to be conuersant with the Apostles? to talke with the Prophets? to discourse with Martyrs? and to enioy the blessed familiarity of all the elect? O but what will it be to enioy his presence whome the morninge stars doe magnifie? whose beutie the sun and moone admire? before whome the holy Angels and all the celestially Spirits doe prostrate themselves. That *summa bonum*, that infinite good, which in it selfe comprehendeth all good whatsoever. O what content will the heart of man feele to behold him,



him, who is one and all. Who although he be most simple without composition, yet containeth in himselfe the perfections of all thinges created. VVhat can the heart of man desire greater?

If it were so much to see and heare Kinge SALOMON, that the Queene of SARA cominge from farr remote parts, moued with his great wisdome, should say:  
 3. Reg. 10. *Beati viri tui & beati serui tui, hi qui stant coram te semper & audiunt sapientiam tuam:*  
 Happy are thy men and happie are thy seruants, those who stande before thee alwayes and heare thy wisdome. VVhat would it be to behold that true SALOMON? that eternall wisdome? that immense maiestie? that inestimable beutie? that infinite goodnes? and which is more to enioy him for all eternitie?

This is the essentiall and truest glory of the Saints: this is the last end and centre of all our wishes. Consider more-over the glory of their bodies, which shalbe beutified with these fowre giftes, subtilitie, agilitie, impassibilitie and claritie. VVhich will be so great, that euery one of the elect (as our blessed Sauour saith) shall glitter like the sun in the kingdome of his father.

If one only sun doth so reioyce and illuminate this vniuerse: VVhat doest thou thinke, so many brighter sunnes will doe which shall there shine?

VVhat should I speake of other ioyes which there shalbe? health without infirmitie: libertie without violence: beutie without deformity: immortalitie without corruption: aboundance without want: rest without trouble: securitie without feare: riches without poverty: ioy without sorrowe: honour without contradiction. There as S. AVGVSTINE saith, shalbe true glory when euery one shalbe comended without error or flattery. True honour shal be denied to none that is wortly of it, and it shalbe giuen to none vnworthy, neither shall any vnworthy attempt it, there, where none shalbe permitted but the worthy. There shalbe true peace, where they shall suffer no contradiction frō themselves or others: the reward of vertue shalbe he which gaue vertue. And he hath promised to giue himselfe. Then which, better or greater no-thinge can be. For what other thinge is it that he spake by the Prophet: *Ego sum Deus, & ipsi erunt mihi plebs*: I will be their God, and they shalbe my people. If I doe not who is it that can satiate their soules?

I wil-

*D. Aug.  
l. 22. de  
cinit. Del  
cap. 30.*

*Leni. 26.*

I wilbe that good which can possibly be desired of man. Their life, their peace, their honour. For so is that vnderstood which **1. Cor. 13.** the Apostle speaketh: *Per se Deus in omnibus.* That God be in all. He shalbe the end of all our desires, which shalbe contemplated without end, shalbe loued without reditionnes, shalbe prayesed without ceasinge.

The place of the saints, if thou doest behold the spaciousnes of it, it shalbe most ample, if the beutie, most delicious, if the splendour, most exceeding bright. There shalbe admirable delightfull society, no vicissitude of times, the day shall not succeed the night, nor the night the day, but all time shalbe there a like. There shalbe one perpetuall springe, which the holy Ghost, with a wonderfull temper shall alwayes make greene and flourishing, there shall all celebrate euerlastinge holy-dayes, reioying with vnspeakable gladnes, there shall all sound their instruments of musick and singe prayes to him, by whose power they liue and raigne for all eternity.

O celestially city, secure habitation, palace flowinge with all delightes, people without murmuring, quiet Citizans, men without pouertie. O that I may at length enioy thee. O that the dayes of my banishment



ment were ended. VWhen will that ioyfull  
day come? VWhen shall I goe out of this  
mortality? VWhen shall I come and ap-  
peare before thy face O God.

*A Meditation for Sunday.*

**T**HIS day thou shalt spend, in recogni-  
ting God Almighty his benefitts,  
that thou mayest bee gratefull to him for  
the same, and thy heart inflamed with the  
loue of him, that hath heaped so manifi-  
stours vpon thee. VWhich seeing they bee  
innumerable, thou shalt take sower of the  
cheifest to thy consideration, which are  
the benefitts of thy Creation, Preservation,  
Redemption, and Vocation, besides parti-  
cular benefitts specially bestowed vpon  
thee.

Touching the benefitt of thy creation,  
examine diligently what thou wert before,  
what God hath given thee when thou  
hadest no precedent merits. Behold thy  
comely bodie well composed of its mem-  
bers and senses; Looke vpon thy noble  
soule, beautified with these excellent facul-  
ties, the vnderstanding, will, and memo-  
rie.

Remember that when he gaue thee thy  
soule, he gaue thee all things, seeing there is

no perfection in any creature, which is not found more excellent in the soule of man. Hence it manifestly followeth, that when God bestowed this great benefitt vpon thee, he with it bestowed what els soeuer thou hast.

Concerninge the benefitt of thy conseruation and preservation, consider that all thy being dependeth vpon the diuine providence and disposure, without which thou canst not moue a foote, or subsist the least moment of time. More-ouer for thy vse he hath created the wholl vniuersall world, and all thinges therin contained; the earth, the sea, birds, fishes, beasts, plants, nay the verie Angels themselues he hath ordained to doe thee seruice. Consider thy health, the strength of limes, and thy verie life it selfe, which thou enioyest, to be the great benefitts of God Almighty, who, by dayly nourishment and other temporall helps, cōserueth all these in their proper vigour. Obserue the miseries and tribulatiōs vnto which other mortall men are subiect; into which, as others thou hadst easily fallē, had not the diuine goodnes protected thee.

In the benefitt of thy Redemptiō: consider the abundant good both in quantitie and qualitie, which he hath purchased to thee by it.

Then

Then call to minde the bitterness of his torments, which he suffered in soule and bodie to ease thee; and that the acknowledgment of these fauours may take a greater impression in thee, in the mysterie of his passion take notice of these fower thinges. First, who it is that suffereth, secondly what he suffered, thirdly for whome he suffered, fourthly why he suffered.

He that suffered, was God, what he suffered, weare the most greuious torments, and such that neuer any mortall man did endure the like.

For whome? for most ingratefull creatures, cursed and worthy of hell fyre.

VVhy? not for any comoditie or profit of his owne, or that we had merited so much by our precedent meritts. But only moued to it by his infinite loue and bounty towards vs.

Cōcerninge the benefit of thy vocation, cōsider the grace he gaue thee, vvhē he infused into thee, the Christian faith, by the receiuing of Baptisme and other Sacraments: when he did enrolle thee in the booke of his eternitie, amongst faithfull soules. If after thy first vocatiō, vvhē by sinne thou hadest lost the innocencie of baptisme, he hath dravvne thee againe out of the mire of thy ovvne corruptiō, restored thee to grace  
and



and brought thee back againe into the way of thy owne saluation: What thanks giuinge oughtest thou to render vnto him, for so great a benefit? How great was his mercie to thee, that with longanimitie he expected so manie yeares? that he permitted thee to spend thy dayes in so great impuritie of wickednes, & that he hath often visited thee with good and holy inspirations? that he did not out of the thred of thy peruerse life, as he serued others in the same place? To conclude, that he called thee with such efficacious grace, that he restored thee from death to life, and opened thine eyes to contemplate his cleare light? How great was his clemencie towards thee, that he supported thee with his grace, not to returne back againe to thy former sinne. But to overcome the enemies of mankind, and constantly to perseuere in a vertuous course.

These are the comon benefits. Besides these, there are manie secretions known to none but those that receiue them, and others, which indeed are not clearely known vnto themselves, but only to him that bestowed them. How often for thy prid, arrogancie, ingratitude and sloth hast thou deserved to be left of God as many for lesse causes haue bene? Yet not  
with-

withstandinge he would not? How often hath God with his singulare providence, exempted thee from euill, remoued occasions of offending, brokē the snare that the enemie had laied for thy perdition; hath frustrated his expectation, and would not permit that his counsell and machinations should preuaile against thee? how often hath he done to vs as he did to S. PETER in the Gospell: *Ecce Sathanus expetuit vs, vt tribaret sicut triticum. Ego autem rogaui pro te, vt non deficiat fides tua:* Behold Sattan hath required to haue you for to sift as vvheat but I haue praied for thee that thy faith faile not. And vvho can know these secret benefits but God alone? benefits, vvhich be palpable are easie to be seene, but those vvhich be private consistinge in the vvorkinge of good or preuentinge of ill the mind of man can not perfectly comprehend. Wherefore it is meet and conuenient to reason, that vve should render immortal thanks to God, for all these benefits and cōfesse ingenuously, that vve haue receiued more, thē vve are able to restore, and that our obligations tovvards him, are so great, that vvith any goods of ours vve shall neuer liue to requite them, vvhen vve cannot so much as number or comprehend them in our vnderstandinge.

Luc. 22.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the time, and fruite of these  
Meditations.*

**B**EHOULD (Christian Reader) thou hast seauen former meditations, accomodated to euery day of the weeke, not so, that it is an offence to meditate vpon an other matter ; when as we haue said before , whatsoeuer inflameth the heart, to the loue and feare of God, and to the keepinge of his comandements , may profitably bee assumed for matter of meditation. VVe therefore out of so great a number haue selected these, both, for that they containe the cheifest misteries of our faith , and that in them is force and efficacie , to rouse vp our souls to the loue and feare of God: as also to set before nouices, which haue need of a guide, prepared and as it were fore-chewed matter, least they confusedly wander vp and downe in this spacious feild, without any certaintie, now meditating vpon one thinge and presently vpon an other.

Moreouer these meditations, as wee haue said



*of Meditation.*

¶

saied elsewhere, sute best with those which doe beginne to turne to God Almightye from their wicked courses. For these had need, to be helped by the consideration of these thinges, to the detestation and horror of sinne, the feare of God, the contempt of the world, which are as it were the first steps to the amendment of our former peruerse life, therefore it is good that they should sometime insist in them, that they may haue the better foundation for other ensuing vertues.

*The former meditations to vvhich me they properly belong.*





OF SEAVEN OTHER  
**MEDITATIONS**  
 OF  
**THE PASSION**  
 OF  
**OUR LORD,**

And the manner howv it ought to  
 be meditated vpon.

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**CHAP. IV.**



**H**ERE followe seauen other  
 Meditations of the Passion  
 of **CHRIST**, his Resurrection  
 and Ascension into heaven,  
 to which others of his holy  
 life may well be added.

*Shr thin-  
 ges cheif-  
 ly to be*

But we must note, that in the Passion of  
 our blessed Sauour, six thinges cheefly are  
 to be meditated vpon. First, the bitternes  
 of

of his sorrowe, that we may compassionate with him. Secondly, the greatnes of our finnes, which were the cause of his torments, that we may abhorr them. Thirdly, the greatnes of the benefit, that we may be gratefull for it. Fourthly, the excellencie of the diuine charitie and bountie therin manifested, that we may loue him more feruently. Fifthly, the conueniencie of the misterie, that we may be drawne to admiration of it. Lastly, the multiplicitie of vertues of our blessed Sauour which did shine in this stupendious misterie, that we may partly immitate and partly admire them; wherfore in the midst of these meditations let vs some time compassionate with our blessed Sauour in the extremitie of his sorrowes, extreame indeed, both by reason of the tendernes of his bodie, as also for the great affection he bore vnto our soules. He did suffer them without any manner of consolation, as we shall speake herafter in its proper place. Sometimes let vs stirr vp in our selues compunction for our finnes, which were the cause of these his so great sufferings. Sometimes let vs kindle in our souls an ardent affection, considering his great affection towards vs, which vpon the Crosse he declared and

*considered  
in the pas-  
sion of  
Christ.*



manifested to the whole world. And the benefit which he bestowed vpon vs in his passion, because he bought vs with the inestimable price of his precious bloud, of which only we reape the fruite and commoditie. Sometimes let vs ruminare vpon the conueniencie of the manner, his eternall wisdome would he pleased to chuse, to cure our miseries, to satisfie for our sins, to releue our necessities, to make vs partakers of his glorie, to repressse our prid, to induce vs to the loue and ioyfull sufferinge of pouertie, iniuries, austeritie, and all commendable laborious exercices. Moreouer it will not be belids the matter, to looke into the admirable examples which did principally shine in the life and passion of our sweet Sauour, his meeknes, patience, obedience, mercie, pouertie, charitie, humilitie, bountie, modestie, and other his rare vertues, which in all his actions did glitter like starrs in the firmament. And cheifly to this end, let vs meditate vpon these thinges, that as neere as we can, we may imitate them. Let vs shake of slouth, and eleuate our souls, that as much as in our power lyeth with the help of his holy grace we may trace his sacred foot-steps. This is the best and most profitable methode of meditatinge vpon our Blessed Sauours  
pas-

passion, that is to say, that ther-by we be drawne to imitation, and so to be wholly transformed into our Blessed Sauour, that each one may say with the Apostle: *Viuo autem iam non ego, uiuit uero in me Christus*: And now I liue but not I, but CHRIST in me. More-ouer in meditating our Blessed Sauours passion, we must set him before the eyes of our souls, imageninge that we see, as present the panges of his heauy sufferinges; and we must not only insist vpon the bare historie of his passion, but we must consider other circumstances, namely these fower, first, who it is that suffereth, secondly, for whome, thirdly, howe, fourthly, why. First, he that suffereth is God, omnipotent, infinite, immense. For whome? the most vngratefull creature in the world, and less regardinge his benefits. Howe? with most profound humilitie, charitie, bountie, meeknes, mercie, patience, modestie, &c. VVhy? not for his owne commoditie, nor our merits; but for his immense pietie, mercie, goodnes and loue towards vs.

Last of all, let vs not onely contemplate his outward, but his inward torments, for much more may be considered in the soule then in the bodie of CHRIST, both for the more sensible feelinge of his passion there,

as also for diuers other considerations therein.

Thus hauing set downe this short preface let vs proceed to the handlinge of the misteries themselues of our blessed Sauiours passion.

### Seauen other Meditations.

#### *A Meditation for Munday.*

**T**His day after thou hast seigned thy selfe with the signe of the Crosse, thou shalt meditate vpon the washinge of the disciples feete, and institution of the blessed Sacrament.

Consider, ô my soule, at this supper sweet IESVS himselfe to be present, contemplate that inestimable example of humilitie, which he there proposed vnto thee for imitation; when risinge from the table, where he sat with his disciples, hee would be pleased to wash their feete: O sweet IESVS, what is it that thou doest? O sweet IESVS, why doth thy mightie Maiestie thus diminish it selfe? O my soule, what wouldest thou haue thought to see God tumblinge at the feete of men, and prostrate before IVDAS? O barbarous and cruel man, could not so great humilitie molifie thy



thy heart ? was not so great bountie and  
sweetnes able to penetrate thy entrals,  
and to reclaime thee from thy intended  
mischeife ? can it be that thou determi-  
nest to sell this meeke lambe for so small  
a price ? nay if it be so , how couldest  
thou yet endure to behold so rare an  
example ? I wonder it did not wound  
thy guiltie soule with compunction for  
thy greuious crime ? O delicate hands,  
howe could you touch so filthie , sordide,  
and with sinne contaminated feete ? O  
pure and vnspotted hands , howe could  
you endure to wash those feete , that  
were fouled with goinge and cominge to  
make a sale of your precious bloud ? O  
thrice happie Apostles , did you not trem-  
ble and stand amazed at the sight of so  
great humilitie ? What dost thou doe  
PETER ? canst thou permitt the Lord of  
Maiestie to wash thy feete ? S. PETER  
wholly astonished with the admiration of  
this spectacle , when he sawe our blessed  
Saviour fallinge downe at his feete , cryed  
out : *Domine tu mibi lauas pedes ?* Lord dost  
thou wash my feete ? what, art not thou  
the Sonne of the euer-liuinge God ? art  
not thou the creatour of the whole world,  
the beutie of heauen, the Paradise of An-  
gels , redeemer of mankind , splendour  
of

of thy Fathers glorie, most deepe fountaine of the eternall wisdom? and doest thou wash my feet? howe cometh it to passe, that thou Lord of so great maiestie and glorie shouldest thus debase thy selfe to so vile a seruice?

Thē cōsider, howe he washed all his disciples feet one by one, and after washinge, wiped them with a linnen cloath wherewith he was girded, open the eies of thy mind to behold in these misteries a representation of our redemption. This linnen cloath so wiped their feet, that all the dirt which was vpon their feet did sticke on the linnen cloath: not without misterie.

For what more foule then mā conceiued in sinne? What more pure thē CHRIST conceiued by the operation of the holy Ghost? *Dilectus meus candidus & rubicundus electus ex milibus*: My beloued saith the spouse in the canticles is white and rudly chosen of thousands. Yet notwithstandinge most pure, most beutifull CHRIST tooke vnto himselfe all the spots of our foules: frō which that he might clēse vs (as you may see him vpon the Crosse) he would be pleased to defile himselfe with the filth of our impuritie. Consider lastly with what words our Blessed Sauour closed vp  
this

this humble action: *Exemplum dedi vobis vt quemadmodum ego feci vobis, ita & vos faciatis*: I haue giuen you an example that as I haue done to you, you may doe the like. Which words doe not only pertaine to this present action, and example of humilitie: but likewise to all the actions of CHRIST through-out his wholl life, vvhich is a most absolute and perfect rule for vs to square our actions by, especially of humilitie, which is here to life represented vnto vs.

*Of the institution of the blessed Sacrament.*

**H**E that desireth to comprehend any thinge of this noble misterie, must certainly thinke, that no tounge is able to expresse that immense loue, and ardent affection vvherewith our blessed Sauour vvas inflamed towards his holy Church and all faithfull soules, in institutinge this stupendious misterie. For vvhen this bridegrome determined to depart out of this mortall life, and to leaue the Church his beloued spouse; least this is departure should be any occasion to her of forgettinge her redeemer; he gaue her this Sacrament vvherin he himselfe is present, as a pledge and memoriall of his perpetuall loue.

*The cause  
vvhy  
Christ in-  
stituted  
this Sa-  
crament.*

*The first.*

Then



*The second*

Then leinge he was to be longe absent, least his spouse should remaine solitarie alone, he, for her consolation, would leaue himselfe for her companion in this holy Sacrament.

*The third.*

When our blessed Sauour was to suffer death for the redemption of his spouse, to enrich her with his most pretious bloud, and to purge her from sinnes : least she should be defrauded of so great a treasure, he would giue her a key in this Sacrament wherby she might at her pleasure enioy these riches: for as S. CHRYSOSTOME saith, we must thinke as often as we come to this Sacrament we put our mouth to the bleeding side of CHRIST, and from thence drinke his most precious blood whose merits we participate.

*The fourth*

Moreouer this celestiall bridgrome, did desire to be tenderly beloued of his spouse, and for this cause would leaue her this mysticall meat, consecrated with most efficacious words, and therin so great vertue, that whosoever receiues it worthily shall presently be strooke with the darts of loue,

*The fifth.*

He would likewise bestowe vpon his spouse some sure pledge therby to make her secure of the certaine succession of future glorie, that in hope of so great a good, he

he might temper the laborious difficultie and make the tedious bitterness of this present life, to be more tollerable, wherefore that the spouse might certainly beleue, that she shall at length attaine to these vnspeakable goods, he hath giuen her for a pawne, this inestimable treasure, vvhich is as much vvorth as that vvhich is expected hereafter, that she should not doubt but that God vvill giue her himselfe in glorie vvhere he liueth in spirit, that vvould be pleased to giue her himselfe in this vale of teares, vvhere he liueth in flesh.

He vvould moreouer vvhen he dyed *The sixth.* make his last vvill and testament, vvherein he left to his spouse a singular manna to cure all her infirmities, a gift then vvhich, nothinge can be more soueraigne, nothinge more pretious, seeing the deity it selfe is therein contained.

Lastly, he desired to feede our soules *The seventh.* with some heauenly foode, seinge they need no lesse nourishment that they might liue spiritually, then the body needeth corporall sustinence that she might liue corporally. Wherefore this spirituall physition whē he had diligently examined and felt

felt the pulse of our fragilitie, instituted this holy Sacrament which he exhibited vnto vs vnder the species or forme of bread, that he might declare what effect it should worke in vs, that isto say, that it is as necessarie for our soules, as bread for the bodie.

*A Meditation for Tvesday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate of the prayer CHRIST made in the garden, the methode therof, and the contumelies he suffered in the howse of ANNAS.

Consider therefore, howe CHRIST our Lord; after the consummation of his my-  
sticall body with his disciples, before he entred into the tragedie of his passion, went to make his prayer vpon the mount Oliuet, wherby he would instruct vs, that in all aduersities and tribulations of this present life, we fly to prayer, as to a holy anchore; the power of which is so great, that it either beateth back the forces of tribulations, or (which is of greater excellencie) ministreth sufficient strength to endure them, with a constant and willinge mind.

He tooke for companions in his iourney  
of his disciples, whome he loued  
above



aboue the rest, S. PETER, S. JAMES, and S. JOHN. Which as they were eie-witnesses of his transfiguration, so likewise they should be present in his agonie, to behold him for the loue of man now transformed into a farr more different shape; then he was, when he manifested himselfe vnto them, in a glorious and glitteringe forme.

That also he might open vnto them, his inward greife, to be much greater then appeared outwardly. He saith vnto them: *Tristis est anima mea vsque ad mortem. Sustinete hic & vigilate mecum:* My soule is heavy vnto death. Stay heere and vvatch vvith me. O vvordes full of compassion! Then departinge from his disciples a stones cast, vvith great submission and reuerence he praied his Father: *Pater si fieri potest transeat à me Calix iste, verumtamen non mea voluntas sed tua fiat:* Father if it be possible let this Chalice passe from me, but not my vvill, but thine be done. Which prayer vvhen he had repeated thrice, he fell into such an agonie, that he sweate drops of blood, trickling dovvne the earth, from his precious body.

Consider that, partly the foreseeinge of the most vnspeakable torments that euer any mortall man suffered, prepared for his  
most

most tender body : partly the distinct representation of the sins of the whole world, for the expiating of which he was now to suffer death vpon the Crosse : partly the remembrance of the ingratitude of many, which would not esteeme , or reape any profit from this great benefitt, stroock such a deepe impression into his soule , that it filled it with sad and incredible anxiety, so troubled his senses and tender flesh, that all the elements of his body beeing weakened ; the opened pores on euery side sweate out drops of blood. If the flesh , which properly suffered not this anguish, but only through a simple imagination , was thus afflicted, what did his soule feele ; to whome properly these sorrowes did appertain ?

His prayer beeing ended , that counterfeit freind of CHRIST *Judas* the traitour, came attedged with a hellish boord; he I say which renounced his apostleship , to be head and Captaine of a troope of hell-hounds , behold in the fore-front of that wicked multitude, impudently cominge to his master whome before he had solde, betraying him with a kisse of peace and freindship.

In that hower saied IESVS to the company, which came to apprehend him:

Yon

You have come out as to a sheefe to apprehend  
me with severdes and fteues? I fast every day  
with you teaching in the temple, and you laid  
not hold on me. But this is your hower and the  
power of darkenes.

This misterie is worthy of admiration,  
for what thinge can be more admirable  
and stupendious, then to see the only be-  
gotten Sonne of God, not only in the  
forme of sinfull man, but in the shape of a  
condemned man: *Hac est hora vestra, et po-  
testas tenebrarum*: This is your hower and  
the power of darkenes. From which  
wordes, is gathered that this innocent lambe,  
was left to the diabollicall crueltie of the  
princes of darkenes, who by their vice-ge-  
rentes and ministers powred all the malice  
and mischeife they were able to conceiue  
against him. Consider, how much for thy  
sake the supreme Maiestic of God is hum-  
bled, to endure all the extremities of tor-  
metes that euer any suffered in this present  
life, not to die for his owne fautes but for  
thy sins, but he did vndergoe this of his  
owne accord, to free thee from the power  
of Sattan.

He had scarce spoken these wordes,  
when that wholl rabble of hunger-starued  
wolves, gapinge after their prey, rushed  
vpon this meeke and innocent lambe, ha-



linge, tearing and afflicting him with as much cruelty as euer they could. O barbarous and inhumane proceedings? O cruell and sauage blowes, contumelious violences, wherwith they tormented him? they insulted after a horred manner no otherwise, the conquerers retourne loaden with spoiles after they haue put to flight their enemies, or hunters when they haue caught their prey. The handes which a little before were exercised in workinge miracles, they were now bound with ropes so cruelly, that they rased the skin, and besmeared them with blood. Thus they led him through the publick streetes of *Ierusalem*, followinge him with contumelies and blowes: behould him in this iournie goinge alone, left by all his disciples, compassed with a multitude of his enemies, forced to make such hast, that he was wholly out of breath, his colour changed, his face blushing, and his wholl body weakened and wearied by reason of the intollerable present difficultie.

Although our blessed Sauour was barbarously and most cruelly handled by that blood-sucking multitude: yet neuer the less thou mightst haue scene in his countenance a pleasant sweetnes, in his eyes a comely grauitie, in his manners a di-  
uine

uine grace , which all the torments of the  
wholl world could not so much as dimi-  
nish in the least degree.

After this goe with our blessed Saviour  
into the house of ANNA S the high  
Priest, that there thou maiest take notice  
what fauour he reaped for his mild an-  
swer, when ANNA S examined him of his,  
and his disciples doctrine : which vvas,  
that one of the Officers gaue him a cruell  
blowve vpon his cheeke sayinge: *Sic respon-*  
*des Pontifici ?* Doest thou ansvver the high  
Priest so? to him CHRIST replied: *Si*  
*male locutus sum, testimonium perhibe de malo: Ioan. 18.*  
*si autem bene, quid me cecidis ?* If I haue spo-  
ken euill bringe testimony of it , but if  
vvel, vvhy doest thou beate me?

Behould, ô my soule, not only the mild  
ansvver, but the print of the Officers hand  
in his tender cheeke, his countenance not-  
vvithstandinge quiet and amiable , not a  
vvhitt moued at the shame of so great an  
effront , because he invvardly thought so  
lovve and humbly of himselfe, that he had  
toured the other side vvithout delay , if  
the rascald had desired it.

*A Meditation for Wednesday.*

**T**His day thou shalt consider, how **CHRIST** our Lord was offered vp to **CAYPHAS** the high Preist: what torments he endured there all that night: how **S. PETER** denied him: and last of all how cruelly he was scourged.

Consider first of all, how he was led from the house of **ANNAS** to **CAYPHAS** his house, it is worth thy paines to followe him thether. For there thou shalt see the mighty sun of iustice ecclipsed: there thou shalt behold, the diuine face vpon which the Angels themselves delight to gaze, to be deformed with the filthy spittings of the Iewes. For our blessed Saviour standinge in the middelt of them, was conuicted by the high Preist in the name of his Father, to speake out, what he was. He answered as becomming himselfe: but they who were vnworthy of such an answer, blinded with the splendour of this great light, like mad dogges rushed vpon him, vomiting vp the bitter gale of their wholl malice against him.

They began whole troupes of them to assault him, to beate and kick him, they spit vpon



vpō his diuine face, and threwe the verie  
fnot of their filthy noses vpō it. Others  
hood-winked his eies with a dirty linnen  
cloath, smiteinge him vpō the cheeke, and  
would in mokerie haue him prophecy  
who it was that strooke him. O admir-  
able and vn-heard of patience, and humili-  
tie of the only begotten Sonne of God.  
O the face which the Angels of heauen  
doe contemplate with incredible ioy, be-  
smeared with their sordid and filthy spit-  
tinges.

Men, when they spit, comonly tourne  
themselues to some foule place, some what  
remote from the sight of others. In this  
pallace was there no place found more  
contemptible therin to cast their spit and  
filthy dryuell, then the sacred face of  
CHRIST IESVS? O man that art but  
dust and ashes, canst thou choose but be  
stirred vp to humility, and contempt of  
thy selfe at so rare an example?

Consider more-ouer, what tormentes  
our blessed Sauour suffered all that night,  
how the Officers that kept him, that  
sleepe should not close his eies, afflicted  
him, derided the supreme Maiestie of  
God, and loaded him with many iniurious  
contumelies.

Waighe with thy selfe, my soule, that now thy spouse is made the white and mark, receiuing vpon him selfe all the darts of iniurious contumelies that the mischeiuous Iewes could shute at him. O cruell night, o vnquiet night, in which thou blessed I E S V S couldest rest no more by reason of anguish and affliction, then others who tooke pleasure to torment thee. The night was ordained for the rest of all creatures, that the members and senses wearied with the labour of the day before, might then take some repose. But the wicked Soldiers that kept thee, spent it in tormentinge of thy senses, they did bind thy bodie, vexed thy soule, fettered thy hands and feete with manicles, buffeted thy cheekes, spit vpon thy face, blinded thine eyes, so that all thy senses when they should haue beene refreshed were afflicted.

O! howe farre did these mattins differ from those, which at the same time the blessed Angels did singe in heauen? they cried holy, holy: and the Iewes cried he is guiltie of death, crucifie, crucifie him. O angelicall spirits which vnderstood both cries, what could you imagine or thinke whē you sawe the inhumane cruelty wherwith he was handled in earth, whome in heauen you adored with so great

great submission and reuerence? did you not wonder to see him suffer all these extreame tormentes for to expiate the sins of those, who inflicted them vpon him? who hath euer heard of such immense charitie, that for this reason one should suffer death, to heale the greife and cure the woundes of his murtherers?

The fall of S. P E T E R, that great pillar, did not a little increase the anxietie of this tedious night; that he, whome he entirely loued amongst the rest whome he chose to be present at his glorious transfiguration, to whome he committed the primacie of his holy Church, whome he ordained to be head and Prince of the Apostles, that he I say, should before his face, and in his presence denie him, not once but thrice, addinge blasphemies and oathes, that he knewe not the man. Tell me P E T E R, did this man seeme to thee so vngodly and wicked, that in future times thou didest feare, it would bee a disgrace vnto thee to confesse him now? didest thou not consider that thou didst first pronounce the sentence of condemnation against him, before he was adiudged by the high Preists, when thou didest not esteeme him so much as worthy of thy acknowledgment? couldest thou doe a grea-



ter iniury to CHRIST IESVS?

But CHRIST sorrowfull for this great fault of S. PETER turned himselfe, and cast his eyes vpon him, that with his gracious countenance he might reduce this wandering sheepe into the sheepfold of his mercies. O admirable aspect, secret indeed, but full of signification, which S. PETER knewe right vvell, and vvell vnderstood of vvhath force and efficacy it vvas. The trovinge of the cock had little auailed to his compunction and conuersion, had not the countenance of CHRIST our Sauour bene adioyned. Whose eyes did speake and vvorke that stupendious change, the certainty of vvhich, not only the flowing teares of S. PETER, but of our blessed Sauour himselfe did sufficiently testifie.

After all these iniuries consider, vvhath CHRIST did suffer, vvhhen he vvas bound to be scourged at the pillar, for the iudge vvhhen he saue, that he could not pacifie the fury of those infernall monsters, he thought good to aduise the, to beate him vwith rodde and whippes. Wherby his vvholl bodie might be torne, hopinge that vway to molifie their obstinate and obdurate hearts: that vvhhen they saue him so torne and mangled, they vwould cease fur-

further to desire his cruell death.

Enter nowve my soule in spirit, into the house of P I L A T E , and haue teares in readines , for thou vvilt haue neede of them , if thou shalt diligently consider, vvhat vvvas done there.

Behould howv inhumanely these abiect and infamous roagues spoyled our blessed Sauour of his garmētes. Marke the humility of C H R I S T , howv he suffered himselfe to be stripped , not so much as opening his mouth, nor vtteringe any vvord against their iniurious behauiour. See his sacred body bound to the pillar vvith many ropes, in such a fassion that on euery side they might haue come to torture him.

Consider, howv our Lord of Angels stood alone in the midst of his cruell enemies, vvithout any Aduocates or Procuratours that vvould defend his cause, yea altogether vvithout any one man, vvho at least vvise a farr off, vvould so much as cōpassionate the bitterness of his tormētes. Doe st thou not heare the noise of rodde and vvhippes wherwith they loaded, teared and rent the delicate fleshe of I E S V S , addinge stroke vpo stroke, and vvound to vvound? doe st thou not see his vvhole body in one short moment of time , vvith  
the

the vehemency and often iteratinge the blowes , to be couered as it were with one vlcere , his skin to be dravvne from the flesh , and blood from his vvholl body , from the crowne of his head to the soles of his feete , to flovve dovne vpon the earth ? especially , is it not dreadfull for thee to behould the place betwixt the shoulders , vvhervpon almost the vvholl force of all the blowes did light?

Consider how CHRIST the Sauour of the vworld , after that extreame cruelty of his tormentours , vvent vp and dovne the Pallace all torne and cutt, seekinge and gathering vp his garmentes , not findinge one amongst those inhumane rascalls, that vwould shew vnto him the least act of humanity , in vvashinge or refreshing his vvoundes , or lend their hand to help him to putt on his cloaths. All these thinges are vvorthy of our diligent consideration, that therby vve might stirr vp our soules to due compassion of his miseries.





## A Meditation for Thursday.

**T** His day thou shalt meditate , how  
CHRIST vvas crownded vwith  
thornes , his presentation before all the  
people, his condemnation, his bringinge  
out to the place of execution , and last of  
all his caryinge of his Crosse.

The Spoule in the Canticles inuited vs  
to the consideratiō of these tormētes, when  
she saide: *Egredimini filia Sion & videre Regem* Cant. 3.

*SALOMONEM* in Diademate , quo coro-  
nauit eum Mater sua in die desponsationis eius, &  
in die letitie cordis eius: Goe forth yea daugh-  
ters of Sion and see King SALOMON in  
the Diademe vvhervvith his Mother hath  
crownded him , in the day of his despon-  
sing, and in the day of the ioy of his heart.

What doest thou doe? vvhath doest thou  
thinke my soule? my tounge vvhy art thou  
silēt? O sweet Sauour whē I opē mine eies,  
and behould this sorrowfull spectacle, my  
heart is rēt vvith greife. What, Lord, vvhere  
not thy former tormētes, imminēt death, and  
aboundāce of thy blood already shed, suffi-  
ciēt for the redēptiō of mankind? but thou  
must yet be crownded vvith sharp thornes?

My soule that thou Maieſt the better vn-  
derſtād this ſadd ſpectacle, ſett before thine  
eies our bleſſed Sauour, in his former beuti-  
be

before he suffered these tormentes? Then behould him on the contrary in this miserable state. If in the first, thou doest rightly veiwe him, thou shalt see him more beautifull then the sun. In his eies a comely grauity, in his speech a gracious facility: in his actions singular modesty: in the gesture of his wholl body profound humility, ioyned with reuerent Maiesty.

Then after thou hast satiated thy soule with pleasure, in behoulding this rare peece of admirable perfection, then tourne thine eies againe, and looke vpon him, as he is in this present miserable state. Ridiculously cloathed in purple, bearinge in his hand a reede for a Kingely Sceptre, and vpon his head a Crowne of sharpe thornes, in steade of a regall Diademe, his eies were dimmed, his face pall and wan, fouled and couered with the filthy spittles of the Iewes: behould him within, and without: his heart consumed with greife: his body torne with woundes and blowes, forsaken of his disciples, hastened to vndergoe death of his enemies, mocked of the Soldiars: despised of the highe Preists: reiected as a wicked Kinge arrogantly assuming this title: vniustly accused, and destitute of all humane aide.

Do not consider these things as done and past many yeares since, but imagine with thy selfe, that at this present they be in actinge before thy face; nor as an other mans sorrowes, but as thine owne afflictions, sett thy selfe in his place and coniecture what tormētes thou shouldest suffer, if thy head were boared to the skull and thy brain-pan pearced with sharp thornes? But what doe I say thornes, when thou canst scarce endure the prick of a small needle? howe great then was the paine, his tender head suffered, with this newe and vn-heard-of torment.

The Coronatiō of our blessed Saniour, with many mockes and scornes being ended the iudge produced him before the people, saying: *Ecce homo*. Behould the mā. If yea thirst after the death of the man, behould him scarce a heares bredth distant from it, yea he is brought to that pass, that he deserueth rather commiseration, then your enuy, if yea feare that he will make himselfe a Kinge, behould he is so deformed, that he scarce reteineth the shape of a mā: doe yea feare any violence from these hands that are so straightly manacled? doe yea dreade any harme frō a mā that is cast into such a miserable and dejected state; whose body is so māgeled and weakened?

Con-



Cōsider, o my soule, in what state thy Sauiour was, when the very iudge himselfe, did thinke with this aspect, would moue his bloody enemies to compassion: from vvhich vve may gather, vvhath a miserable thinge it is, to see a Christian of such an obdurate heart, vvhich can or vwill not condole the passions of our Sauiour, vvhē they vvere such, that the very iudge did thinke them sufficient, to mollifie the malice of his enemies. But PILATE seeinge vwith thees exceedinge tormentes, he could no vvay temper or asvvage their fury, vvent into his Pallace satt in the iudgment seat to pronounce the definitiue sentēce against CHRIST. Nowve the Cross vvas prepared at the dore and the fatall standard vvhich threatened ruine to our blessed Sauiour, vvas novve in a readines.

The sentence beinge pronounced vwith the addition of more tormentes, they loaded his vvearied shoulders vwith a heavy Crosse, to carty to the place of his execution.

But our meeke Lord, not only not reiected it, but out of that immense charity tovvards vs, vvhervvith he suffered for our sins, obediently and vvillingly embraced it.

Novv

Now the innocent I s A A C with his weake shoulders, supported the intollerable burthen of the Crosse to the place of sacrifice. The simple people and deuout women, followed him weeping. For who was able to containe teares, to see the Lord and Kinge of Angels goinge thus on foote, with the extremity of tormentes, his knees quiueringe, his body stooping, his eies blinded, his face besmeared with blood, his head crowned with thornes, and his eares deafened with the noise of drummes and trumpetts?

Leaue a while, O my soule, this horred spectacle, & with wateringe eies, with sobbes, and sighes goe to the blessed Virgine, and say to her. Lady of Angels, Queene of heauē, Gate of Paradise, Aduocate of the world, Sanctuary of sinners, Health of the iust, Ioy of the Saintes, Mistresse of vertue, Mirrour of purity, Symbol of chastity, Patterne of patience, and Rule of all perfection. O me miserable and vnfortunate, what haue I scene with the eies of faith? Howe could I liue to behould so inhumane vsage, interrupting sighes will not permitt me scarce to speake, howe I left thy only begottē Sōne, loadē vvith a mighty Crosse, to vvhich he vvvas presently to be nayled, and carryinge it to the place of execution.

What

What heart, what minde, what soule, is able to comprehend the dolour, the blessed Virgine M A R I A then did suffer? her heart fainted, and a dead sweate with extreame anguish possessed her wholl body, and presently she had giuen vp the ghost, had not the diuine dispensation reserued her, till better times, for her greater merite, and more abundant reward.

The blessed Virgine, with speed followeth the steps of her beloued Sonne, that ardent desire wherwith she was inflamed to see him, added vigour to her, of which sorrowe had bereaued her: she heard a farr of the noise of armes, the concourse of people, and the sound of trumpets, on euery side publishing the passion of CHRIST, after that she sawe the glitteringe of launces and holbeards: in the way she found his footsteps sprinked with drops of blood, by which without any guid or leader she might easily find the way. Approachinge to her Sonne, she lifted vp her eies swelled with teares, to behold him, whome she esteemed dearer then her owne soule.

O what strife was there in the soule of this blessed Virgine, betwixt feare and loue? she did vehemently desire to see her Sonne, but on the other side she durst not  
cast



cast her eies vpon him in this lamentable and afflicted state. At length when she drew neerer, these two celestiall lights beheld each other, their eies pearced each others soule, but greife enforced their tongues to silence, notwithstanding their heartes did mutually discourse, and the Sonne vnto the Mother said: Sweet Mother, why comest thou hether ony Ioue; my doue? thy sorrowe reneweth my miseries, and my tormētes crucifieth thy soule? retourne, retourne againe into thy house. This defiled company of theeues and murderers befeemeth not thy virginall purity. These and the like words they inwardly vttered, all the way vntill they came to the place of execution.

*A Meditation for Fryday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the misterie of the Crosse, and the seauen wordes which **C H R I S T** spake vpon it: Rouze vp my soule and duely ponder this great mistery of the Crosse, which brought fourth the fruite of satisfactiō, to expiate that great losse, which all mankind suffered by a tree.

Consider how, before our blessed Sauiour came to the Mount of Caluarie ( to make his death more ignominious ) his

F

cruell

cruell tormenters stripped him of all his clothes, except his coate, which was without seams, behould howe patiently this meeke lambe suffereth his garmentes to be taken from him, not so much as openinge his mouth or speakinge one worde against their barbarous dealinge. He permitted these things willingly, but with a great straine to modesty. He was stripped naked that we might receiue a better garment, to couer the nakednes of our sins, then that of A D A M the first parent of all mankind, made of the leaues of fig-trees to couer the nakednes of his body.

Some Doctours thinke that the crowne of thornes was taken of, to pull with more facillitie his vnseamed garment ouer his eares and after to be fastened on againe, which could not be without a vehement paine, the sharp thornes did a fresh wound his sacred head with vnspeakable torment. And surely this is not vnlike, seeing in the wholl time of his passion they spared him in nothinge; but the bitterest tormentes they could deuise, they heaped vpon him, especially when the Euangelist saith, they did to him whatsoeuer they would. This coate did so cleaue to the woundes of his sacred body, by reason of the congealed blood, that when the barbarous hangemen drewe

drewe it of with exceeding violence, they renewed againe the woundes of IESVS, they pulled of with it many particles of flesh, so that the wholl body of CHRIST, in euery part fleayed and bloody, from the head to the foote seemed to be but one entire and continueate wound.

Weigh well with thy selfe (my soule) the immente goodnes and mercy of God, manifested in these tormentes, behould he that spreadeth the heavens with cloudes, vesterh the greene and pleasant feilds with flowers, and he that liberally bestoweth clothinge vpon euery creature, behould him I lay starke naked. Consider what cold, this pretious body, being wounded, suffered, when they had not only spoyled him of his garmentes, but his very skin was not entire, neither were his woundes bound vp, but exposed to the iniury of the aire.

If S. PETER, being well clothed could not ouercome the cold of the fore-passed night: What cold doest thou thinke this delicate body suffered being in euery place wounded and all naked?

Then consider how CHRIST was fastened to the Crosse, and what torment he suffered, when the sharp nayles pearced the most sensible parts of his tender body;



Weigh with thy selfe that the blessed Virgine, which beheld these thinges with her eyes, and hearing, the frequent blowes of the mallet, which they iterated in driuinge the nayles into the handes and feet of her Sonne, was not vn sensible, but the heart of the Mother was pearced with the handes and feete of the Sonne.

When CHRIST was made fast vpon the Crosse, presently they lifted it vp, and put it into a hole there before prepared, behold how these wicked torterours of innocent IESVS pricked forward with their owne malice, lett the heauy Crosse fall into the hole with such a violence, that it so much strained his body hanginge only by the nayles, and rent wider the woundes of his handes and feete.

Sweet Saniour can there be found a heart so hard and steely, which is not molified at such a spectacle, when the very stones did cleaue in sunder, as sensible of thy cruell tormentes?

O Lord, the dolours of death compassed thee round about, the stormes and waues of the raginge sea enuironed thee on euery side. The waters entred into thy soule, thou didest descend to the deepe abyss, where thou couldst find no footing. When thy heauenly Father did forsake

ake thee, Lord, what couldst thou expect  
thine enemies would doe? they cried out  
against thee, and thy freindes did wound  
thy heart, thy soule was sad and heavy, nei  
ther was there any that would cōfort thee.

Lord, from these vnheard-of tormētes,  
and aboundāt satisfactiō which thou hast  
made for my sins, I cannot but acknow  
ledge with all humility the greiuiousnes of  
my heinous transgression, which were the  
occasions of all thy miseries. I see thee my  
King and God fastned vpon a wodden  
Crosse, with two yron nayles; thy pretious  
and tender flesh to be stretched without  
any manner of respire. If thou wouldest a  
little ease thy selfe vpon thy fecte, the  
weight of thy wholl body enlargeth their  
woundes: if thou wouldest leaue the burthē  
to thy hāds, the weight of it doth likewise  
rend their woundes; thy sacred head could  
find no rest because thou hadest no other  
pillowe thē the sharpe crowne of thornes.

O virgine Mother howe willingly  
wouldest thou haue embraced him in  
thine armes, therō to ease and rest himselfe  
a little. But the armes of the Crosse would  
not permitt the, vpon which, if he would  
repose the sharp thornes strooke deeper  
into his head: the troubles of the Sonne  
were much augmented by the presence

of the Mother ; which no lesse crucified  
his soule then [the] leuues his body to the  
Crosse.

O sweet I E S V, in one day thou didest  
carry a double crosse, the one vpon thy bo-  
dy, the other in thy soule, the one of pas-  
sion, the other of compassion, the one  
pearced thy body vvith nayles of iron, the  
pther thy soule vvith nayles of sorrowe.  
What tonge is able to expresse, vvhat  
thou didest suffer to see the anguish of thy  
Deare Mother? vvhose soule thou didest  
certainly knoyve to be crucified together  
vvith thee? vvhen thou didst behould her  
heany heart, pearced vvith the svword of  
sorrowe: vvhen vvith bloody eies thou  
didst looke vpon her beutifull face, pale  
and vvan: and didst heare the sightes of her  
dyinge soule, lamentinge that she could  
not dye. What didst thou suffer to see pure  
fountaines of teares gushinge from her  
eies, and to heare her pittifull complaintes  
she made in sorrowinge for thy suffe-  
ringes.

Thē consider the seauē vvordes vvich  
CHRIST spake vpon the Crosse, to his  
heavenly Father, sayinge: *Pater ignosce illis*  
*quia nesciunt quid faciunt*: Father forgive  
them for they knowv not vvhat they doe.  
To the Theose: This day thou shalt be  
vvith



vvith me in Paradise; To his Mother: Woman beould thy Sonne. To the people he said: I thirst. And to God againe: My God, my God, vvhy hast thou forsaken me. *Consummatum est*: It is consummate. In to thy hands I commande my spirit.

Ruminate, my soule, vvith vvhat exceedinge charitie, he made intercession to his heauenly Father, for his enemies and persecutors. With vvhat piety and mercy he receiued the penitent Theefe into his fauour. With vvhat affection he committed his Mother to the protection of his beloved disciple: vvith vvhat ardour he testified himselfe vehemently to thirst after the saluation of mankind. With vvhat clamour he thundered out his prayer, expressing to the diuine Maiestie the greiuousnes of his tribulations. Hovve perfectly he fulfilled the obedience, enioyned to him by his heauenly Father. And lastly hovve he yealded his soule into his blessed handes.

Euery one of vvhich vvordes doe afford vs a great deale of matter for our instruction. In the first, vve are taught, to loue our enemies: in the second, mercy to vvardes sinners: in the 3. piety to vvardes our parents: in the fourth, to thirst after our neighbours saluation: in the fift, vvhen

we are oppressed with tribulations , and seeminge as it were to be left of God, to fly to prayer : in the sixth, the vertue of obedience and perseuerance : in the seauenth, perfect resignation into the handes of God , which is the sume of all perfection.

*A Meditation for Saturday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the pearcinge of our blessed Sauours side with a speare : the takinge downe of **C H R I S T** from the Crosse : the lamentations of the women : and other things which did occur about his buriall.

First take notice, how that **C H R I S T**, after he gaue vp the ghost vpo the Crosse, his enemies much reioyced at his death. But yet there was not an end of their insatiate cruelty , but still their encreasinge malice raged against him being dead. They diuided and cast lotts for his garniētes, and with a speare pearced his pretious side.

O barbarous caitifes ! ô adamantine heartes! did you thinke those tormentes he suffered before his death were not sufficient , that you would not vouchsafe to spare him beinge dead ? what madnes did possesse your soules ? lift vp your eies and be-

behold his dead face, his eies sunck, his hanginge head, and his wholl body beinge wan and pale. Although your heartes be harder then adamant, yet let this pittifull aspect molifie them.

Behould the centurian stroock â launce into his sacred side vvith such violēce, that the very Crosse did tremble, out of whose side did gush aboundance of blood and water, for the redemption of all mankind. O riuer of paradise rūninge forth to water the wholl earth! O pretious wound which rather the loue thou didest bare to vs sinfull men, then the enemies weapon did inflict! O gate of heauen, windowe of paradise, place of rest, tower of fortitude, sanctuary of the iust, nest of doves, tombe of pilgrimes, flourishinge bed of the spouse! Haile sacred wound, which pearcest deuout heartes, haile rose of incredible beauty, haile pretious stone of inestimable valour, haile dore, through which, lieth open a free passage to the heart of CHRIST, an argument of his loue, and pledge of eternal felicity.

Consider that in the eueninge, Ioseph and NICODEMVS came with ladders to loose and take downe the body of our Saviour: but the blessed Virgine after all these tormentes, perceiuinge her

Son-



Sonne to be taken from the Crosse, and disposed for the graue, she tooke him whē he was let downe, in her armes, humbly beseeching that holy company, that they would suffer her to come neere his body, and to bestowe her last kisse and embracings vpon him, which vpon the Crosse she could not doe. Which they would not, nor could deny. For if her freindshaddepriued her of him dead, which her enemies did her of him liuinge, they had redoubled the anguish of her soule.

When she sawe her Sonne in this case, what greife, what dolours can we imagine she then did suffer? Angels of peace come and lament with this blessed Virgine, lament heauen, lament starres, lament all creatures of the vvorld. She embraced the mangled body of her beloued Sonne, she hugged him in her armes (for loue administered this strength) she thrust her face amongst the thornes to come to kisse his mouth, vvherby she vvounded her face vvith the sharp pricks vvich she vvashed vvith flowing teares;

O sweet Mother, is this thy beloued Sonne? is this he vvhome thou didest conceiue vvith great glorie, and bringe fourth vvith great ioy? is this that bright mirror in vvich thou wert vvont to see thy selfe?

all that were present did likewise mourne, the other **M A R I E S**, which were there mourned, the noble-men lamented, heauen and earth with all creatures mourned with the blessed Virgine.

That holy Euangelist lamented, who often embracinge the body of his deare Master, said: O my good Lord and Master, who shall hereafter teach and instruct me? with whome nowe shall I consult in doubtfull occasiōs? vpon whose lapp shall I now rest my selfe? who shall now reueale vnto me celestiall secretes? what sudden change is this? yeaſterday I rested vpon thy sacred brest, where thou didst communicate to me the ioyes and glory of euerlastinge life, and nowe in recompence of that benefit I embrace thee dead in my armes? is this that countenance which I beheld glorious and transfigured vpon the mount of Thabor? is this that face which I sawe brighter and more glitteringe then the sun?

And that blessed sinner **S. M A R Y M A G D A L E N** lamented, who often kissinge the feete of her Sauour, said: O the true light of our eyes, the only remedie and solace of my soule. If I sinne againe, who shall hereafter receiue me into fauour? who shall defend me from the calum-

lūies of the Pharifies? O how altered are these feete from those I washed with my teares? O beloued of my heart, why doe I not dye with thee? O life of my soule, how can I say, I loue thee, when I liuinge, see thee dead before me?

Thus this blessed cōpany did mourne, and lament, watering with abundant teares the body of I E S V S. The sepulchre beinge ready they spiced his holy body with sweet spices, they wrapped it vp in a fine linnen cloth, bound his head with a handkercher, laied it vpon a beere, carried it to the place of buriall and put it into a newe monument.

The monument was couered with a stone, and the face of M A R I E obscured with a cloud of sorrowe. When there againe she had her Sonne adue, she then began to be more and more sensible of her solitude. For then she saue her selfe, to be deprived of the greatest good. But her heart remained buried vwith her treasure in the graue.





## A Meditation for Sunday.

**T**His day thou shalt consider and meditate of the descent of CHRIST to *lymbus Patrum*: his resurrection: diuers apparitions to the blessed Virgine M A R I E; S. M A R I E M A G D A L E N E, and his other disciples: and last of all his glorious ascension into heauen.

Take notice therfore of the incredible ioy, the Fathers, vvhich vvere detained in *lymbus*, felt at ther cominge of the redeeme vvhich came to free them from the darke prison, vvhetherin they vvere shutt for many thousand yeares. What prayses, vvhich giuinge of thankes did they render to him, vvhich had brought them to the longe desired haue of their saluation? they vvhich retourne from the east *Indies*, are vvont to say, that they thinke all their forepassed labours vvell bestovved, only for that ioy they finde, the first day of their arrivall into their country. If the banishment of a yeare or tvvo, and the tediousnes of a little trouble some iourney, can breed such ioy in men, vvhich vwill the absence of three or fovre thousand yeares doe frō that pleasant and celestially country. What ioy therfore doe vve thinke, those holy Fathers had, vvhether they tooke possession of it?

Then

Then consider the excessive ioy of the blessed Virgine, when she sawe her Sonne risen from death, when it is most certaine, and vndoubted, that she felt the greatest sorrowe and affliction at his ignominious death and passion that could be, her ioy must needs excell the rest, in his triumphat resurrectiō. How great doest thou thinke was her content and pleasure to see her Sonne, whome she greivously lamented before his death, livinge, glorious, and attended with a ioyfull troop of holy Patriarches, whome he brought alonge with him? What said she? what did she? with what kisses did she salute him? with what affection did she embrace him? what pleasant riviers of teares distilled from her eyes? how earnestly did she desire to followe her Sonne, had it been permitted to her?

More-over take notice, of the ioy of the holy M A R I E S, particularly of her which stood weeping, at the Sepulchre of C H R I S T, then, when she sawe him whome her soule loued: without doubt she cast her selfe at his feet, when she beheld him livinge, whome she sought amongst the dead.

After his Mother, he therefore appeared to her, who loued him most ardently, and,  
about

about others; sought him most diligently and perseverantly, to instruct vs that when we looke for God, we must seeke him with teares and diligence.

Consider that after this, he appeared to his disciples going vnto Emma, in the habit of a Pilgrime; behould, how curteously he ioyned himselfe a companion to them: how familiarly he conuersed with them: howe handsomely he dissembled his person: and after, with what affection he manifested himselfe vnto them, and last of all howe he left their tounge and lippes filled with the delightfull discourse of his Maiestie. Let thy discourse and talke, be like these disciples, as they trauailed in the way, of the loue and passion of our blessed Saviour; and I dare be bould to say, that he will not deny vnto thee his sacred presence.

In the mystery of our blessed Saviours ascension, first consider that he deferred it for forty dayes, that in the meane time often appearinge to his disciples, he might instruct them, and with them discourse of the kingdome of heauen. For he would not forsake them by ascendinge into heauen, before he had disposed their mindes to ascende with him spiritually.

Hence



Hence vve may note, that those are often deprived of the corporall presence of **C H R I S T**, and of sensible deuotion, vwho vwith the vvinges of contemplation fly vp to heauen and feare no danger. Wherin the diuine prouidence, vvhervvith it curbeth & gouerneth the elect, doth vvonderfully manifest it selfe, hovve it strengthneth the vveake, exerciseth the stronge, giueth milke to little ones, prepareth stronger meat for great ones, comforteth some, afflicteth others, and to conclude accomodates himselfe to all accordinge to their severall degrees in their spirituall profit. Wherfore he that is roborated by diuine comfort, ought therfore not to presume of him selfe, seeinge this sensible consolation, is but the meat for infirme ones, and a great signe of vveaknes: nor he that is exercised by affliction, ought therfore to be dejected, seeinge temptation is for the most part, a testimony of a valiant minde.

**C H R I S T** ascended vp to heauen, in the presēce of his disciples, that they might be vvitnesses of this mystery, of vvwhich they vvéré eie-beholders, none can giue better testimony of God almighties deedes, then he vvwhich hath learned them by experience: vvherfore he that vvould certainly

tainly knowe, how good, howe sweet, and mercifall he is towards his, and what is the force and efficacy of his diuine grace, loue, prouidence, and spirituall consolation: lett him aske those, which indeed haue had experience of them, for they, and only they, will giue him the best instructions and satisfaction.

More ouer **C H R I S T** would ascend, his disciples lookinge vpon him, that they might profecute him with their eies and spirit; that they might haue a cordiall feelinge of his departure: that in his absence, they might feare to remaine alone, and that they might the better dispose themselues to receiue his holy grace. The Prophet **H E L I S E V S**, when **H E** 4. Reg. 20  
**L I A S** was to be taken and separated from him, desired that he would giue him his spirit, **H E L I A S** made answer: *Rem quidem difficilem postulasti, attamen si videris me, quando tollar à te, erit tibi quod petisti; Si autem non videris, non erit.* Thou hast asked a hard thing: neuer the lesse if thou see me when I shall be taken from thee, thou shalt haue what thou hast asked: but if thou see me not, thou shalt not haue it.

In like manner they shall be heires of the spirit of **C H R I S T**, whome loue  
G doth

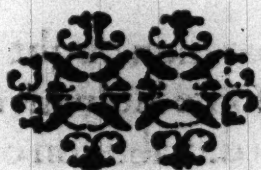
doth cause to mourne, for his departure: to whome his absence doth seeme greivous, who earnestly whilst they liue in this banishment, desire his holy presence. Such a Saint was he that saied: thou art gon my comfortour, without any care of me, at thy departure thou didest blesse thine, and I sawe it not; the Angels promised, that thou shouldest retourne againe, and I heard them not. Who is able to expresse or vnderstand the solitude, trouble, cries and teares of the blessed Virgine, of his beloued disciple, S. MARIE MAGDALEN, and the other Apostles: when they sawe CHRIST to be pulled from them, who together with him carried vp their affectionate heartes? and yet notwithstanding it is saied of them, that they retourned with great ioy into *Hierusalem*: the same loue and affection which made them bewaile the visible losse of their beloued Lord and Master, did likewise cause that they congratulated each other; much reioycinge at his glory, for it is the nature of true loue, not so much to seeke the comodie of it selfe, as the honour and comodie of the person that is beloued.

Last of all to close vp this meditation, it is left to vs to consider, with what glory, with what ioy, this noble conquerour was brought



brought into that heavenly citie: what solemnities were then instituted in the glorious Paradise, howe magnificently was he entertained by those celestiaall citizens? what a delightfull spectacle was it, to see men accompanied with Angels, to goe in procession, and to sett vpon those seates, which for many thousand yeares, were vacant. But a most ravishing:ioy it was, to behold, the sacred humanity of CHRIST IESVS, farr transcending al others, to sett at the right hand of his eternall Father.

All these things are worthy of thy attentue consideration, that thou maiest learne, that the labours thou doest vndergoe for the loue of God, are not spent in vaine, therefore he that humbled himselfe vnder all creatures, it was requisite that he should be exalted aboue all; that the louers of true glory may trace this path, they must expect if they desire to be aboue all, that first they be subiect to all, euen their inferiours.



## C H A P. V.

*Of six things necessary to  
prayer.**Six partes  
necessary  
for medi-  
tation.**Prepara-  
tion.**Reading.*

**T**H E S E are the exercises and meditations ( Christian Reader ) wherwith euery day thou Maiest feed thy soule, which if thou dost rightly vse , thou wilt neuer want matter , to busy thy minde deuoutly. But thou must note, that meditation, if it be well performed, ought to consist of six partes. Some of which goe before, others followe mentall prayer.

First before we apply our selues to meditation , it is necessarie , that our minde and soule be diligently prepared to this holy exercise. As the stringes of an instrument , except they be before-hand well tuned , will neuer make a pleasant melody.

After preparation ought to followe the readinge of some holy mystery , accordinge to the distribution of dayes in the weeke , which in younge beginners is cheifely necessary yntill with continuall vse

vse and custome, matter of meditation offereth it selfe vnto their memories. Then insist vpon the matter to be meditated vpon. To meditation we must ioyne deuotion and sincere giuinge of thanks to God for all his benefits: then a generall oblation of all the life of CHRIST, for recompence of any benefit, and our owne workes to the honour and glory of God. Last of all, petition, which is cheifely called prayer, wherein we desire all things necessarie for our owne saluation, of our neighbours, and the good of the wholl Church.

Meditation.

Giuinge of thanks.

Oblation.

Petition.

These six partes are required to mentall prayer, which besides other comodities they minister abundant matter of meditation, seeing they sett before vs diuers sortes of meates, that if one will not relish our spirituall tast, we may fall vpon another: if we be deficient in one; in another we may employ our mindes, and kindle our deuotion.

But in euery meditation, neither all these partes nor order is alwayes necessary: although, as I said before, to younge beginners, it is. That they should haue a certaine methode, accordinge to which they are to guide them selues, wherfore in that which hath, or shall be said, my intention



is not to sett downe, a generall rule, or immutable perpetuall lawes, the violating of which should be a fault, but my meaninge is, to introduce, and bringe in, younge beginners and novices into the right way, and methode of meditation: which when they are once in vse, experience, but especially the holy Ghost will better informe them.



CHAP.

## CHAP. VI.

*Of the preparation necessarie  
to prayer.*

**I**T will not be beside our purpose to handle all these partes severally, we will therefore first beginne with preparation which we did put first.

He therefore which goeth about to meditate, after he hath placed his body after a decent manner, either kneelinge, or standinge, or composinge himselfe in manner of a Crosse, or prostratinge himselfe vpon the ground, or sittinge, if infirmitie or necessitie doth so require, lett him first signe himselfe with the signe of the Crosse, then let him recollect the dispersed powers of his soule, especially the imagination, and sequester it from all temporall and transitorie thinges. Lett him eleuate his vnderstandinge to God, consideringe his diuine presence, with that due reuerence and attention as is requisite, and lett him imagine God Almightye himselfe to be presente in his soule, as in verie deed hee is.

If it be the morninge meditation, after a generall act of contritiō, for his sins, let him make to God a generall confessiō: if in the eueninge let him examine his conscience, concerninge all his thoughtes, wordes, and workes, of that day: of the forgetfulnes of God Almighty his benefits, and of the sinnes of his former life, humbly prostratinge himselfe in the sight of the diuine Maiestie in whose presence, he now is after a particular māner, sayinge the wordes of the Patriarch A B R A H A M: *Loquar ad Dominum meum, cum sim puluis & cinis:* Shall I speake to my Lord, seeinge I am but dust and ashes. And singinge this Psalme. *To thee haue I lifted vp mine eies, vy which dyvellest in the beauens. Behould as the eies of seruantes, are on the handes of their masters. As the eies of the handmaide on the handes of her mistresse: so are our eies vnto our Lord God vntil he haue mercie on vs. Haue mercie on vs, O Lord, haue mercie on vs: Glorie be to the Father, &c.*

Gen. 18.

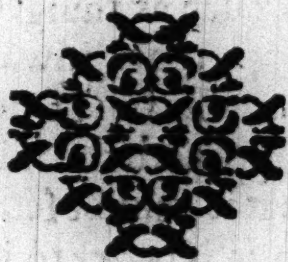
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Cor. 2.

And because we are not able of our selues to thinke any good, but all our sufficiencie is from God, and because none can say Lord I E S V S, that is to say, call vpon the name of I E S V S, without the holy Ghost, to thee therefore, O holy Ghost, doe I turne my selfe, with teares imploringe thy



thy assistance: Come holy Ghost send fourth  
from heauen the glisteringe beames of thy true  
light: Come Father of the poore, come giuer of  
revvardes, come light of our heartes, sweet com-  
forter, sweet guest of the soule, sweet refresh-  
inge, rest in labour, temperature in heat, in  
mourninge a gratefull solace, ô blessed light, re-  
plenish the heartes of the faithfull. Then fol-  
loweth the prayer. *Deus qui corda fidelium, &c.*  
These beinge said, he shall pray to God to  
bestowe vpon him his diuine grace, to assist  
at this holy exercise, with that attentio, due  
recollection, feare and reuerence, beseech-  
inge so great a Maiestie, humbly beseech-  
inge him, so to passe ouer this time of  
holy prayer, that he may retourne from  
thence fortified with new seruour, to  
execute what soeuer shall belonge to his  
holy seruice, for prayer which beareth not  
this fruite, is luke-warme, imperfect and  
of no moment before God.



CHAP.

## CHAP. VII.

## Of Readinge.

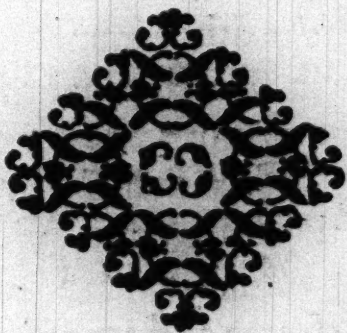
**A**FTER a due preparation, followeth readinge of those things which are to be meditated vpon. Which must not be too hasty but mature, serious and quiet, to which the vnderstandinge must not only be attentiuē, to vnderstand those things which are read: but also, and cheifely the will: that those things which are vnderstood may giue a spirituall gust and feelinge. When he falleth vpon any place, which much moueth his affection, lett him there pause a while, that in his heart it may cause a greater impressiō. He must also beware not to spend too much time in readinge therby to hinder meditation, it being a more fruitefull exercise, for-as-much as things attentiuely considered pearce more inwardly, and produce greater effects. If peraduenture some time it happeneth the mind so to be disperfed, that it cannot settle it selfe to prayer, then it is better to insist a while longer in readinge, or to ioyne readinge to meditation, or after the readinge of one point

*What to  
doe vnto  
the mind  
is desired.*

point to pause vpon that a while, then after the same manner to proceed to the others. Although the vnderstandinge tyed to certaine wordes which are red, cannot so freely be carried into diuerse affections, as when it is free from this bond.

It is oftentimes very profitable for a man to vse some violence to himselfe, to expell his vaine and triflinge fancies after the example of the Patriarch IACOB, manfully to wrastle against them, perseueringe vnto the end, after which fight, the victorie beinge obtained, God doth for the most part, giue greater deuotion, or more pure contemplation, or some other supernaturall gift, which he neuer denieth, to those who faithfully fight in his cause.

It is putting out of vnpurifiable thoughts violence is to be vsed





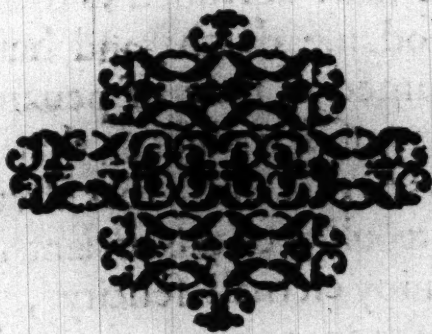
## CHAP. VIII.

*Of Meditation.*

**A**FTER readinge followeth meditation. Which is some times of such thinges as can be represented to our imaginatiō: as the life and passion of our blessed Saviour: the latter iudgment, hell, and the Kingedome of heauen. Sometimes of such thinges as are subiect rather to the vnderstandinge, then imagination, as the consideration of God Almightyes benefits, his bounty, clemency and other perfections which are in God.

These meditations are called, the one intellectuall, the other imaginarie. Both which in these exercises are to be vsed after a different manner, as occasion requirerh. When the meditatio is imaginarie, so that the thinge meditated vpon, hath, or euer had, any actuall existance or beinge, vve must so frame and represent it to our fancie, as though vve vvere present in the same place, and saue vvith our eies those thinges, vvich there vvere done. This representation vvill make the consideration  
of

of these thinges, more viuacious, and cause  
a greater impressiō in our soules. For if  
our imaginatiō can comprehend wholl  
citties and cōuntries, with lesse difficulty,  
can it comprehend one mysterie. This  
helpeth much to the recollection of the  
minde: this will retaine the same busied in  
it selfe, as a bee in the hyue, where she  
worketh and disposeth all things diligent-  
ly. But in these thinges a moderatiō must  
be vsed, for to run with a violent immagi-  
nation to *Hierusalem*, to frame to the fan-  
cie those thinges which are to be medita-  
ted there, doth oftentimes hurt the head.  
Wherefore it is good to abstaine from im-  
moderate imaginations, least nature op-  
pressed with too violent apprehensions,  
becomes infirme and weake.



## CHAP. IX.

*Of giuinge of thanks.*

**A**FTER meditation followeth giuinge of thanks, the occasion of which must be taken from the matter meditated vpon; for example if the meditation be of the passion of our Sauour, we must giue thanks vnto him that, he hath redeemed vs from so great tormentes. If of sinnes: that, with longanimity he hath expected vs to doe penance. If of the miseries of this life: that he hath preserued vs from the greatest part of them. If of death: that he therto he hath defended vs from the perills of sodaine death, and hath fauourably granted vs time of penance. If of the glory of Paradise; that he hath created vs to that end, that after the stormes and troubles of this present life, we should enioy eternall felicity, after this manner, we are to proceed in other meditations.



To these benefits, we may ioyne the others which we handled before, to witt, the benefits of our creation, conseruation, redemption and vocation. As much as in vs lieth, lett vs giue him thanks that he hath created vs after his owne image and likenes, that he hath giuen vs a memorie to remember him, an vnderstandinge to know him, and a will to loue him. That he hath comitted vs to the custodie of Angels, that by the help of our Angel Guardian, he hath exempted vs from many daungers, preserued vs from many mortall sinns, defended vs from death and malice of the deuill, while we were in this case (which was no lesse, then to free vs from eueralstinge death, to which by sinn we were obnoxious.) That he would vouchsafe to assume our nature vpon him, and for our sakes suffer a most ignominious death. That we were borne of Christian parentes; that we were regenerated by Baptisme: that in this present life he hath promised grace, and vnspeakable glory in the world to come: that he hath adopted vs for his Sonnes: that in the Sacrament of confirmation, he hath fortified vs with stronge weapons to fight against the world,  
the

the flesh, and the deuill; that he hath giuen himselfe to vs in the Sacrament of the aulter: that he hath left vnto vs the Sacramēt of penance , to recouer that grace which was lost by mortall sin. That he hath visited vs dayly with good and holy inspirations: that he hath giuen vs grace to perseuer in holy and pious exercises.

After the same methode we must proceed in accountinge other God Almightyes benefites, as well generall as particular, and for all publicke or priuate , manifest or secret, giue him thanks: and we must inuite all creatures celestiall and terrestiall to bare vs company in this holy exercise: singinge the songe of the three children:

Mat. 3.

Psal. 102.

*Benedicite omnia opera Domini Domino : laudate & superexaltate eum in secula , &c.* And the Psalm: *Benedic anima mea Domino : & omnia que intra me sunt , nomini sancto eius: Benedic anima mea Domino : & noli obliuisci omnes retributiones eius. Qui propitiatur omnibus iniquitatibus tuis : qui sanat omnes infirmitates tuas. Qui redimit de interitu vitam tuam: qui coronat te in misericordia & miserationibus.* My soule blesse thou our Lord : and all thinges , that are with in me , his holie name. My soule blesse thou our Lord: and forget not all his retributions. Who is propitious to all thine iniquities: who healeth

all

all thine infirmities. Who redeemeth thy  
life from deadly falling : who crowneth  
thee in mercie and commiserations.

CHAP. X.

Of Oblation.

**C**ORDIALl thākes beinge giuen  
to God, presently the heart brea-  
keth naturally into that affection,  
which the Kingly Prophet D A V I D felt  
in himselfe when he said : *Quid retribuam* Psal. 114.  
*Domino: pro omnibus quæ retribuit mihi?* What  
shall I render to our Lord: for al thinges  
that he hath rendred to me? Which desire  
we shall in some sort satisfie, if we offer to  
God whatsoeuer we haue. First therefore  
we must offer to God our selues, for his  
perpetuall seruātes, wholly resigninge our  
selues to his holy will, howsoeuer he shall  
please to dispose of vs. We must likewise  
direct, all our thoughtes, wordes and wor-  
kes, whatsoeuer we shall doe or suffer, to  
the supreme honour and glorie of his sa-  
cred Name. Then we must offer to God  
the Father, all the merits of his only be-

H gotten



gotten Sonne, all the labours and sorrowes he did vndergoe in this miserable world, to fulfill the will of his heauenly Father, beginninge from his natiuitie, and hard manger, to his contumelious crucifyinge and giuinge vp the ghost: for as much as these are all the goods and meanes, wherof in the newe Testamēt, he hath left vs heires; wherfore, as that is no lesse our owne, which is giuen vs freely, then that we get with our industrie: so the meritts of **CHRIST**, which he hath freely bestowed vpon vs, are no lesse our owne, then if we had got them with our sweat and labour.

Hence euery man may offer this sacred oblation, as the first, numbringe one by one all the labours and vertues of the life of **CHRIST**, his obedience, patience, humilitie, charitie, and his other vertues, seeinge these are the most excellent of all oblations, that we can offer to God.



**CHAP.**

## CHAP. XI.

## Of Petition.

**T**HIS noble oblation beinge well performed, we may securely and confidently proceed to the askinge of any gifts and graces. First therefore God Almightye is to be prayed vnto, with inflamed charitie and ardent Zeale of his diuine honour, for the conuersion of all nations, that all people may be illuminated with the knowledge of him, praylinge and adoringe him as the only true and liuinge God. To this end from the bottome of our heartes we may vtter the wordes of the Kingely Prophet : *Confiteantur tibi populi Deus : confiteantur tibi populi omnes :* Let people, o God, confesse to thee : let all people confesse to thee. Psal. 66.

Then we must pray to God for the Prelates of the Church, the supreme Pastour, Cardinalls, Archbishops, Bishops and other Prelates, that he would be pleased so to gouerne and illuminate them with the light of his heauenly grace, that they may be able to bringe all men to the knowledge and obedience of their creatour.

We must also pray to God for Kings and Princes (as S. PAVLE admonisheth) and for all men placed in dignitie, that by their diligent care, their subiects may live à quiet life, well instructed with honest manners, for this is gratefull to God, that willeth all should be saued, and come to the knowledge of his truth.

Then for all the members of his mystricall bodie, for the iust that he would be pleased to conserue them in their sanctitie. For sinners, to conuert them, from their wicked courses, to the amendment of their liues. For the dead, that he would free them from the expiatinge tormētes wherein they are deteined, and bringe them to their eternall rest.

We must pray to God, for the poore infirme captiues, band-slaues or others in whatsoeuer tribulation, that for the merits of his Deare Sonne, he would vouchsafe to help, and free them from all their miseries.

After we haue prayed for the good of our neighbours, let vs at length intreat for our owne necessities, which discretion will teach euery one in particular (if he be not altogether ignorant of himselfe) what they are. But that we may set doune a methode for beginners, we will lead them into  
this



this path way. First therefore we must pray to God, that for the merits and passion of his only begotten Sonne; he would pardon our sins, giue vs grace to auoide them, and to expiate them with good workes worthy of penance; but especially to implore for help and assistance against those euill inclinations and vices to which we are most propence, layinge open to our heavenly physician all the woundes of our diseased soules, that with the oyntment of holy grace, he would heale them.

Then let vs aske, for the most excellent vertues wherein the wholl perfection of a Christian man consisteth, for example, faith, hope, charitie, feare, humilitie, patience, obedience, fortitude in aduersitie, pouertie of spirit, contempt of the world, true discretion, puritie of intention, and others like to these, which are placed in the supreme top of a spirituall buildinge. Faith is the prime roote and foundation of a Christian: hope is a staffe to defend vs from all tribulations of this present life: charitie the end of all perfection: feare of God, the beginninge of true wisdom: humilitie is the Basis and ground-worke of all vertues: patience is the strongest armour against the fury of our enemies:

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obedience is the most gratefull oblation to God, wherein man offereth himselfe for a sacrifice, discretion is the eye of the soule, fortitude the hand therof, wherewith it bringeth all her workes vnto perfection: purity of intentiō directeth all her actions vnto God. We must after pray for other vertues, which may help vs forward in the way of perfection: as, sobriety in meate and drinke, moderation of the tongue, custody of the senses, modesty and composition of the outward mā, sweetnes in giuinge good example to our neighbours, rigour and seuerity towards our selues, and the like.

Last of all we must conclude this petition, with a seruent imploringe of the diuine loue, and heere to pause a while, so that the cheifest part of time be spent in an earnest desiringe of this grace and fauour, seeinge in the diuine loue all our felicitie doth consist, to that end this prayer followinge will not be vnprofitable.

*A prayer for the obtaininge of diuine  
loue.*

**G**Rant I beseech thee, ô Lord, that I may loue thee with all my soule, with all my heart, with all my strength, ô my only hope, my perfect glorie, my refuge  
and

and solace. O my dearest of all freindes,  
sweet spouse, flowrishing spouse, sweeter  
then any hony. Delight of my heart, life  
of my soule, ioy of my spirit. O bright day  
of eternitie, cleare light of my bowels, pa-  
radise of my heart, originall of all my good,  
ô my cheifest strength, prepart, ô Lord, in  
my soule a delicious bed, that accordinge  
to thy promise, there thou maiest dwell,  
and make thy mansion. Mortifie in me  
whatsoever is displeasinge to thee, and  
make me a man accordinge to thine owne  
heart. Pearce the marrowe of my soule.  
Wound my heart with the dartes of deare  
affection, and inebriate me with the wine  
of loue.

When shall I perfectly please thee in  
all thinges? when shall I cast from me all  
thinges contrary to thee? when shall I be  
wholly thine? when shall I leaue to be  
mine owne? when shall nothinge line in  
me, but what is thine? when shall I em-  
brace thee with ardent affection? when  
wilt thou inflame, and consume me with  
the flames of loue? when wilt thou pearce  
and replenish me on euery side, with thy  
sweetnes? whe wilt thou lay open and ma-  
nifest to my pouerty, that pretious Kinge-  
dome which is within me, that is to say,  
thy sacred selfe with all thy riches? when

wilt thou vnite me perfectly vnto thee? when wilt thou transforme and swallowe me vp wholly in thee, that from thee I may neuer depart? when wilt thou remoue from me all obstacles, which hinder me that am not one spirite with thee. O beloued of my soule! O delight of my heart! Lookes downe vpon me and heare me, not for my owne merits, but out of thy infinite goodnes: instruct, illuminate, direct, and help me in all, and through all, that I neither speake or doe any thinge, but that which I shall knowe to be gratefull before thy sight.

O my God, my loue, my ioy, my pleasure, my fortresse and my life! why doest thou not help the poore and needy, imploringe thy assistance? thou which fillest heauē and earth, why doest thou suffer my heart to be empty? thou which cloathest the flowers and lilies of the feildes with beauty: thou which nourishest the birdes of the aire: thou which susteineest the least creature of the earth: why art thou vnmindfull of me, that forgetteth all thinges for the loue of thee. O immense goodnes! I had knowledge of thee too late, that I loued thee no sooner. O newe and ancient beauty! O miserable was my state when I liued without thy loue! O wretched was  
my



my condition, when I knewe thee not ! ô intollerable blindnesse of my heart vwhen I saw thee not ! I sought thee farr abroad, vvhêthou vvert vvithin me. Yet at length, though late, I haue found thee, let not thy mercy suffer me, ô Lord, that euer I forsake or leaue thee againe.

And because to haue eies to see thee is one of the cheefest things that pleaseth thee, Lord, giue me the eies of a solitarie turtle, to contemplate thee, giue me chaste eies full of modestie : humble and amorous: sanctified and vweepinge: attent and discreet eies vvwhich may vnderstand and performe thy vvill. Lord giue me grace to behold thee vvith such eies, as thou maiest looke vpon me againe, as thou didest vpon PETER, vvhen he denied thee, and didest moue him to bitter compunction for his sins. Looke vpon me as thou didest vpon the prodigall childe, vvhen thou didest runn to imbrace and kisse him: Or as vpon the Publican, not daring to lift vp his eies to heauen. Behold me vvith those eies that thou didest inuite MARIE MAGDALENE to penance, and to vvash thy feete vvith teares. Or vvith those eies vvhervvith the Spouse in the Canticles incited thee to her loue vvhen thou saydest : *Quam pulchra es amica mea,* Cant. 4.

*mea, quam pulchra es! oculi tui columbarum!*

Hovv beautifull art thou my loue, hovv beautifull art thou! thine eies as it vvere of doves.

That my aspect be pleasinge, and that the beautie of my soule be gratefull vnto thee, doe thou I beseech thee bestowve the gift of vertues and graces vpon me, to deck and trim my selfe, wherby I may liue to glorifie thy holy name for euer and euer.

O mercifull and holy Trinitie! Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost, one only true God, teach, direct and help me in all. O Father omnipotent, I beseech thee by the greatnes of thy immense povver, to confirme and strengthen my memory in thee only, and to replenish it vvith holy and pious cogitations. O Sonne most vvise, illuminate my small vnderstandinge vvith thy eternall vvisedome, to knowv thy euerlastinge truth, and my ovvne misery. O holy Ghost loue of the Father and the Sonne, vvith thy incomprehensible goodnes make my vvill conformable to thy diuine pleasure, inflame it vvith such a fire of thy holy loue, that no waters which rise from the turbulent feare of euill suggestions, may be able to extinguish it. O holy Trinitie and one God, I would to  
God

God I could doe nothinge else but prayse  
and loue thee, and as much as all thy holy  
Saintes. I would to God I had the loue of  
all creatures in me alone, I would with a  
willinge minde trāsferre and tourne it to the  
loue of thee, although this were nothinge,  
in respect of what thou deseruest. Only  
thou thy selfe, canst worthily loue and  
praise thy selfe. Because none else besides  
thee, is able to vnderstand thy incompre-  
hensible goodnes, and therefore the iust  
poise of loue resideth only in thy sacred  
breast.

O blessed Virgine Marie, Mother of  
God, Queene of heauen, Lady of the  
world, Mansion of the holy Ghost, Lilly  
of purity, Rose of patience, Paradise of  
pleasure, Mirrour of chastity, Vessell of  
innocency, intercede for me miserable ba-  
nished wretch, and bestowe vpon me a  
portion of thy abundant charity.

O all yea Saintes of God, and yea angeli-  
call Spirits, which burne with a vehement  
affection of your Creatour, especially yea  
Seraphins, who inflame both heauen and  
earth with loue, doe not forsake my mis-  
erable soule, but purifie it as you did the  
lippes of Esay from all vice and vncleanes,  
and set it on fire with the flames of your  
ardent loue, that I may loue and seeke our  
Lord



Lord God, restinge and remaininge in him  
for euer and euer. Amen.

## CHAP. XII.

### *Certaine documentes to be obserued about Meditation.*

**H**ETHERTO we haue only set  
downe plentifull matter for me-  
ditation, which for the present is  
verie necessarie, because the greatest part  
of men, either neglect or disdain this  
exercise, because they want sufficient mat-  
ter to consider vpon; nowe we will briefly  
handle those thinges which pertaine to  
the forme and methode of meditation, of  
which, though the holy Ghost be the  
principall master, neuer-the-lesse experien-  
ce teacheth vs, that certaine documētēs are  
likewise necessary, because the way to  
heauen is cragged and full of difficulties,  
wherfore ther is need of a guide, without  
which, many haue gone astray a longe  
time from the right path, or at leastwise,  
haue not attained to their desired end, so  
soon as they expected.

The

*The first Document.*

**T**He first Documēt therfore is, that we doe not so adheare to those thinges, which aboue we haue digested into seuerall pointes, and times, as that we should thinke it a fault, to fall vpon other thinges, wherein the minde may reape more abundant fruit, for seeing deuotion is the end of all those exercises, that which cometh nearest to this scope, is alwayes to be accompted best. Which ought not lightly vpon euery occasion to be done, but with a cleare and manifest profit.

*The second Document.*

**W**E must be wary of too many speculations in this exercise, and vse rather efficacious affections of the will, then curious discourses of the vnderstandinge: wherfore they goe not in the right vway that meditate of diuine mysteries, as though they were to preach them to the people in a sermon: which is rather to dissipate, then recollect the spirit. And to wander abroad, the to be busied in their owne home. Therefore he that will meditate with fruit to his soule, must come to it, like an humble simple creature, bringinge rather  
a will

a will disposed to tast these holy mysteries profitably, then acrimony of vnderstandinge to discusse them learnedly. For this is proper to those who giue themselves to studdies, not to those who consecrate themselves vnto deuotion.

*The third Document.*

**I**N the precedent Document we declared, how the vnderstandinge is to be moderated and subiected to the will, now we will prefix some limits to the will, out of which she cannot straggle without a fault. That therfore she be not too immoderate in her exercise, we must knowe, that deuotion is neuer to be expressed with the violence of our armes, as some doe thinke, who with cōstrained sorrowe doe wringe out teares and commiseration, while they consider the tormentes of CHRIST IESVS: for this doth rather dry the heart, the make it capable of diuine visitations (as CASSIANVS doth excellently teach) more-ouer this extraordinarie force, doth often hurt the body, and by reason of the burthen, which this violēce bringeth with it, the mind is left so nauseous that it searcth to retourne againe to these exercises: when experiēce teacheth, that it is the cause of so much



much trouble, he therefore that will fruitfully meditate vpon the passion of CHRIST, let him not be too anxious for sensible commiseration, but let it suffice, that he exhibiteth himselfe present to his sufferings, beholdinge them with a simple and quiet eie, and consideringe them with a tender compassiue heart, rather disposed to entertaine that affection which God almighties mercy shall suggest, then that which shalbe wronge out with violence. Which when he hath done, let him not be solicitous nor sorrowfull, what other thinges God doth deny or will not giue.

*The fourth Document.*

**H**ENCE we may gather what attentio, is to be obserued in prayer, wherefore the heart must not be languishinge, remisse or deiected; but quicke, attentive and eleuated to heavenly thinges. And as it is necessarie to come to God with such attention, eleuation of the minde, and abstraction from sensible thinges; so it is no lesse necessarie to temper sweetly this attention, that it be neither hurtfull to bodily health, nor impediment to extinguish deuotion. For when any be so intensiue to the matter they meditate vpon, without any respect to their infirme nature,

ture, doe oftentimes so dull their braines, that they be vnapt for other exercises. On the contrarie, there are some, to auoid this danger are so remisse and lasy in their attentio, that easily they suffer their mindes to be distracted with other idle thoughtes

These two extreames, that they may be both auoided, such moderatio is necessarie, that the head be not weakened with too violent attention, nor the thoughtes permitted carelessly to wander out of supine negligence, in which thinge, we must imitate a good rider vpon an vntovward horse, vvhich neither holdeth him in too hard, nor looseth the raines vpon his neck, but guideth him equally, that he giueth not back, nor goeth forvvard too speedily. So vve must striue in meditation that attention be moderate, diligently resistinge euill thoughtes, but not violent vvith anxietie.

We must note also, that, these thinges vve here speake of attention, are cheefly to be taken heed of in the beginnunge of meditation: for it often happeneth, that, those vvhich are too violent in the beginnunge, doe founder in the midst of meditation. As trauailers makinge too much speed in their settinge forth, are tired in the midst of their iourney.

## The fifth Document.

**A**Mongst all documentes this is chiefly to be obserued, that when in meditation we cannot presently perceiue that sweetnes of deuotion we expect, not therefore to wax pusillanimous, or leaue of from the exercise begun, but patiently with longanimity expect the cominge of our lord: seeinge it becometh the excellency of the diuine Maiestie: the vility and basenes of mans condition, the importance of the busines we haue in hand, to stay a while before the gates of his sacred pallace: If he cometh presently after a little expectation, with many thanks let vs with gratitude entertaine this vnderferued fauour: If he maketh longer delaies, let vs humble our selues before him, and confesse that we doe not deserue this grace: If he vouchsafeth not to come at all, let vs bære it patiently with a quiete mind, and content our selues, that we haue offered our selues, with all we haue vnto him for a gratefull sacrifice: that we haue denied our owne proper wills, resigninge the vnto his Power: that we haue crucified all our inordinate appetites: that we haue fought against our passions and vices. And finally

I                      that



that we haue performed whatsoeuer was in our power to be done. And although we haue not worshiped him with sensible deuotion. Yet let it suffice vs, if that we haue worshiped him *in spirit and truth*, as he requireth.

Last of all, let vs perswade our selues, that this is the most dangerous and cheifest to be feared rocke of this present nauigation, and place, wher in the true and faithfull seruantes of God are tried, and distinguished from infidells, from which if we shall depart in safety, in all others, we shall haue a prosperous successe.

*The sixth Document.*

**T**His document not much differeth from the former, which notwithstandinge is equally necessarie, and this it is, that the seruant of god must not content himselfe, that he hath felt a little sensible gust from meditation; as many doe, when they haue shed a little dry teare, or felt a little molifyinge of the heart, that they haue attained to the scope and end of this exercise.

But they are farr deceiued, for euen as to make the earth fruitfull one little shewer which

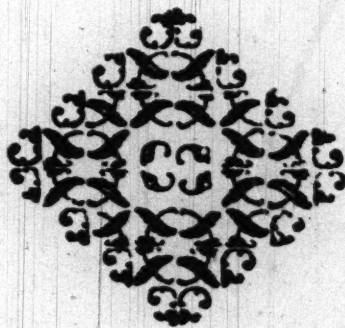
which alaith the dust, is not sufficient, but it must haue a great deale of raine throughly soke into the rootes of the plantes, before it can giue any hopes of a fruitfull yeare: so the aboundance of celestiall waters, are necessarie to our soules for to make them bringe fourth the fruit of good workes. Wherefore we are not with out cause admonished by spirituall men, that we should spend as much time as possible we can in this holy exercise, and it is better to insist some longe time together, then by fitts. For when the time is short, it wilbe almost all consumed, in quietinge the imagination, and recollecting the heart. and it often happeneth, that whilst we should reape the fruit of our former trouble, meditation is quite broke of.

Concerninge the prefixed time for meditation, it seemeth to me, what soeuer is less the two howers, or an hower and halfe, is to little for this exercise, because almost one hower is spent in tuninge the instrument of our soules, repressinge idle and vnprofitable thoughts, and recollectinge the minde from temporall thinges: and some time also is necessarie to spend in reapinge the fruit of our prayer in the latter end.

Although I cannot deny, but after some

pious action the mind is better disposed for meditation: for as dried wood quickly burneth, so the mind that is well disposed, is sooner kindled with this celestial fire.

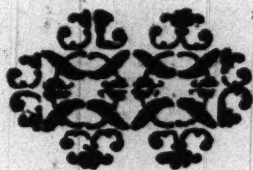
The morninge also is the best time for meditation, because the mind is then most free from fancies, and therefore can with better facilitie apply it self to this holy exercise. But who by reason of the multiplicity of outward affaires, cannot spend so much time, yet at leastwise let them, with the poore widdowe in the ghospell, offerr vp to god the small mite of their sincere affection. And no doubt but he who provideth for all creatures accordinge to their severall necessities, will graciously accept it, if their culpable negligence doth not deserue the contrarie.





*The seauenth Document.*

**T**HE seauenth document is, that he that is visited with diuine consolations in, or, out of prayer, ought to haue a speciall care to spend that time; aboue other, with fruite vnto his soule, for whilest this prosperous gale doth blowe, he will goe further in his iourney towards heauen in one hower, then other wise, he hath, or shall doe in many dayes. So did the holy Father S. FRANCIS doe of whom S. BONAVENTURE writeth that he had such a solicitous care of diuine visitations, that whensoever vpon the way he was recreated with them, he would either goe before, or stay behind his companion a while, vntill he had digested this diuine morsell sent vnto him from heauen. They which are negligent and carlesse to answere diuine visitations, are comonly chastised with this punishment from God; that when they seeke, they will hardly find them.



*The eighth Document.*

**T**HE last Document and of greatest moment is, in this exercise of prayer we must ioyne meditation to contemplation, seeinge one is, as it were a ladder vnto the other: wherefore it is the part of meditation, with diligent attention to consider and ponderate celestially things, first one, then an other, that at last some pious affection may be stirred vp in the soule, like him that with a Steele striketh fire out of a flint: but it is the property of contemplation which followeth meditation, to enioy this kindled fire, that is to say, to embrace that affection, vvhich vwith much labour he hath sought and found, in deep silence and tranquillitie of spirit, not vwith many discourses and speculations of the vnderstandinge, but vwith a pure simple relation and eie to veritie, hence a certaine doctour faith, that meditation doth discouise vwith labour and small profit, but contemplation vwithout any trouble, and vwith much fruit: the one doth seeke, and the other findeth: the one doth chewe, and the other eateth the meate: the one doth reason and consider, the other contemplateth those thinges and tasteth, and in fine the one is the

the meanes, the other is the end: the one is the way and motion, the other the tearme of the way and end of the action. From these things which we haue said, that rule or axiome is very frequent amongst spirituall Masters, which fewe of their scholars doe rightly vnderstand. That is, *fine adepto media omnia cessare*. The end beinge attained vnto, all meanes doe cease. For example, the mariner resteth when he hath ariued to his desired hauen. So he that meditates, when by the meanes of meditation he shall come to the rest and sweet gust of contemplation, ought to leaue the cragged way of reasoninge and discouise, contentinge him selfe, with the memorie of godalmightie alone, whome he may behold as present to his soule, and quietly enioy that sweet affection, which he shall vouchsafe to bestowe vpon him, whether it be of loue, admiration, ioy, or the like, and the reason is, because the end of this busines consisteth rather in loue, and affection of the will, then in speculations of the vnderstandinge. When therfore the will hath captiuated the one, and attained to the other affection: all reasoninge and speculations of the vnderstandinge are to be left: that the soule may bend all her forces to it, without a confused wandringe



to the actions of the other powers. Therefore a certaine doctour giueth this counsell to those who perceiue the selues to be inflamed with the fire of diuine loue, that they should quite abolish all other thoughtes and speculations, though neuer so sublime and subtile, not that they are euill, but because for the present they hinder a greater good. And this is no other, then after we haue come to the end, to leaue meditation for the loue of contemplation.

Which we may doe (to speake particularly of this matter) in the end of euery exercise (that is to say) after the petition of diuine loue, as aboue said: and that for too reasons, first because it is supposed that the labour of the finished exercise hath produced some fruite of deuotiō towards God almighty, as the wiseman saith, *melius est finis orationis, quam principium*. Better is the end of prayer, then the beginninge. Secōdly it is expedient, that, after labour in prayer, the vnderstandinge rest a while, and recreate it selfe in the armes of contemplation.

Heere let euery one resist what soeuer immaginations shall present them selues vnto his minde, let him still his vnderstandinge, let him fasten his memorie strongly vpon

vpōn god, consideringe that he is placed in his holy presēce. But let him not adheare to any particular contemplation of God, but only content himselfe with that knowledge, which faith hath ministred vnto him: and to this let him add his will and affection, seeinge this is only that which embraceth God, and in which the wholl fruite of meditation consisteth. The weake vnderstandinge is little able to conceiue, or comprehend any thinge of God, but the will can loue him verie much.

Let him therefore rouze vp himselfe from tēporall thinges, and let him recollect himselfe with in himselfe (that is to say) to the centre of his soule, where is the liuely image of god, here let him harken attentiuely as though he heard God almightie speakinge from a high tutret, or as though he held him fast being present in his soule: or as though there were no other persons in the world, besides God and him-selfe.

Nay I say more, let him quite forget him selfe, and those thinges which he doeth: for as one of the ancient holy Fathers saith, prayer is then euery way compleat, when he that prayeth doth not consider that he is before God in prayer. And this is to be done not only in the end of the exercise, but in the middest and in euerie

part of meditation. For as often at this spirituall sleepe shall sweetly oppresse any one (that is to say) when the vnderstandinge is drowned as it were in a sleepe, (but the will watchinge) let him quietly enioy this delicate meate as longe as it shall last.

But when it is digested, let him retourne againe to meditation, in which we must behaue our selues like a gardiner, who, when he wattereth a bedd of his garden, after he hath once sprinckled it with water expecteth a while, vntill it be drunke in, then sprinckleth againe, that at last it may thoroughly wett the earth, That it may become more fruitefull. But what the soule cast into this heauenly sleepe, and illuminated with the splendour of this eternall light, doth enioy! what facietie, what charitie, what internall peace! no tongue is able to expresse: this is that peace which exceedeth all vnderstandinge, this is that felicitie, a greater then which cannot be imagined in this vale of miserie: there are many so inflamed with this fire of diuine loue, that their interiours, at the verie memory of this blessed name without any meditation at all before, doe rest in ioy.

These need no more consideration or discourses, to loue god, then a mother needs

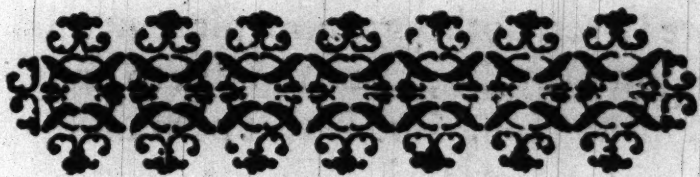


des motiues to loue her child, or the bride  
her husband. Others there are so absorped  
in God, not only in prayer, but also in out-  
ward busines, that they wholly forget the  
selues, and all creatures for the loue of him.  
neither are these effects of diuine loue to  
be admired, seinge worldly loue causeth  
often times greater matters in the mindes  
of men, that it makes them madd. What  
shall we attribute lesse efficacie to grace  
then vnto nature and sin? When therefore  
the soule shall feale this operation of diuine  
loue, in what part of prayer soeuer it hap-  
peneth, let him neuer refuse it, although  
he spend all the time of this exercise in it  
without any manner of consideration at  
all of that point, he purposed to meditate  
vpō (except he be specially obliged vnto it.)  
For as saint AVGVSTINE saith vocall pray-  
er ought to be left, if it hurteth deuotion, so  
meditation ought to be differred if it hur-  
teth contemplatiou. But as it is necessarie to  
leauē meditation for this affection, and to  
ascend from the lesser to the greater: so  
often times this contemplation is to be left  
for meditation, when it is so vehement,  
that the corporall health, receiueth some  
damage therby. This oftentimes hap-  
peneth to those who taken with the pleasure  
of this diuine sweetnes, giue them selues

too indiscreetly to these exercises, and vse them too immoderately, to whome (as a certaine Doctour saith) this vvill be the best remedy, that they desist from contemplatiō, tounninge their mindes to some other good affection, as of compassion in meditatinge of the sufferinges of our Sauiour. Or about the sinns and miseries of this world, to exonerate the hearte, diuertinge it from that too much intension.



THE



THE SECOND PART.  
OF  
DEVOTION  
AND OF  
THOSE THINGS  
WHICH THERVNTO  
BELONGE.

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CHAP. I.

*What is deuotion.*

**A**MONGST all the troublesome difficulties, to which they who frequent the exercises of prayer and meditatio<sup>n</sup>, are subiect, none is greater, then that which they suffer from the defect of deuotion, which often felt in prayer.



*Deuotion  
maketh  
all thin-  
ges easy.*

prayer. For if they haue this, nothinge is more sweet, nothinge more pleasant, nothinge more easie, then to insist to prayer and meditation. But if that be wantinge, nothinge more hard, nothinge more difficult, nothinge more burthensome then to pray. Wherefore seeing we haue already spoken of prayer, meditation, and the methode to performe it. Nowe it will not be besides our purpose to treat of those thinges which partly promote, and partly hinder and extinguish deuotion in the mind of man. As also to lay open the temptations which are obuius to those who frequent these pious exercises, and last of all to annex some certaine documentes, vvhich may not a little auaille to the vvell performance of this busines. We vwill therfore beginne from the definition of deuotion: that it may manifestly appeare vvhata pretious margarite it is, for vvhich vve vvarr.

Deuotion, as S. THOMAS saith, is a vertue vvhich maketh a man prompt and readie to euerie vertuous deed, and stirringe him vp to doe vvell. vvhich definition euidently sheweth the necessitie and vutilitie of this vertue, as conteininge more in it, then any man can imagine.

For

For the better vnderstandinge of this, vve must knowe, that the cheifest impediment that hindereth vs from leadinge a vertuous life, is the corruption of humane nature, proceedinge from sinne, vvhich bringes vvith it a vehement inclination to vice, and a great difficultie to doe vvell; this make the vway of vertue cragged and troublesome, although in it selfe considered, nothings in this vvorld, is so svweet, so louely, so beautifull.

The diuine wisedome hath ordeined the help of deuotion, as a most convenient remedie to ouer-come this difficultie: for as the north wind dissipateth clouds, and maketh a cleare skye, so true deuotion expelleth from the mind, the tediousnes of this way, and maketh vs with alacritie prompt to pious actions. This vertue doth so farr forth obtaine the name of vertue, that likewise it a speciall. gift of the holy ghost; a heauenly deuue, an assistance obtained by prayer, vvwhose property is to remoue all difficulties happeninge in prayer and meditation: to expell tepiditie: to minister alacritie in the diuine seruice, to instruct the vnderstandinge: to roborate the vvill: to kindle in our heartes heauenly loue: to extinguish the flames of vnlavvfull desires: to ingendre a hatred  
and

and loathing of sinne and all transitorie thinges: and last of all to him that possesseth it, to infuse a newe seruour, a newe spirit, a newe mind, and newe desires to doe well. For as SAMPSON as long as he had his haire, did excede all men in strength: but when that was cutt he was as weake as others. So the soule of euerie Christian recreated with the help of deuotiō, is stronge and valiant. But when it is depriued of it, it becometh infirme and weake.

But aboue all the prayses, which can be heaped vpon this vertue, this is the cheifest, that although it be but one only vertue, yet it is a prick and motiue to all: they therefore that desire, to walke in a vertuous way must get this for a spur, for without it, he will neuer be able to rule his rebellious flesh.

In what  
deuotion  
consisteth.

Hence it manifestly appeareth, in what the true essence of deuotion doth consist, not in tendernes of heart, or abundance of consolations wherewith they which meditate are often recreated, except a prompt alacritie of the mind to doe well be therunto adioyned: especially seeinge it some times happeneth, the one to be found without the other, God almightie so disposinge for the triall of his seruantes. Though I can not denie. But that these consolations doe  
offer



often proceed from deuotiō and promptitude of the minde to doe well, and on the contrarie, that true deuotion is not a little augmented by the same consolations and spirituall gusts. And therefore the seruantes of God may lawfully desire and aske the, not for the delight they bringe with them, but because they doe greatly increase deuotion which maketh vs with alacritie to apply our selues to vertuous actiōs, which the Kingly Prophet testifieth of himselfe sayinge: *Viam mandatorum tuorum cucurri, cum dilatasti cor meum*: I haue runne the wayes of thy commandementes when thou hast enlarged my heart, that is, when thou hast recreated me with the sweetnes of thy consolations which are the cause of this my readines.

Now let vs treat of the meanes, wherby this vertue is to be attained vnto, which will bringe no small profit with it, for seeinge it is the spurr to all other vertues, to set downe the meanes, wherby it is to be obtieined, is no other thinge then to prescribe the meanes to get all other vertues.

## CHAP. II.

*Nine meanes or helpes vvhetherby this  
vertue of deuotion may be attained  
vnto, vwith the least difficultie.*

*Conti-  
nuance of  
exercise  
helpeth  
deuotion.*

**T**HE thinges which promote deuotion are many, of which we will handle a fewe.

First, it helpeth much deuotion: if those exercises be vnderaken with a generous resolution, ready to vndergoe what difficulty soeuer shall occur, for the obtaininge of this pretious margarite. For it is certaine, that nothings is excellent which is not difficult, of which kind is deuotion, especially in beginniges.

*Custodie  
of the  
heart.*

Secondly, a diligent custodie of the heart from euery vaine and vnprofitable cogitation, from affections, strange loue, and turbulent motions, doth much promote deuotion. For it is euident, that euery one of these, is no little hindrance, seeinge this vertue cheifly requireth a quiete heart, free from all inordinate affection, and so well composed as the stringes of a well tuned instrument.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, custodie of the senses : especially the eies, tongue, and eares, <sup>Custody of the senses.</sup> seeing by these the heart is much distracted. For those things which enter in through the eies and eares, doe straine the minde with diuers imaginatiōs, and cōsequently disturbe and trouble the peace and tranquility of the soule. Wherefore one not without cause saied, that he that meditateth must be deafe, blind, and dumbe. For by how much lesse he wādereth abroad, with greater recollection, will he reioyce at home.

Forthly, solitude helpeth deuotion <sup>Solitude.</sup> much, for it doth not only remoue the occasions of sinne, and take away the causes which chiefly disturb the heart and senses, but it maketh a solitary man, to rouze vp himselfe from temporall things, to be present to himselfe and conuerse incessantly with God. To which the opportunity of the place doth admonish, which admitteth no other societie.

Fifthly, the readinge of spirituall <sup>Readinge of spirituall bookes.</sup> bookes doth not a little nourish deuotion, because it administreth matter of consideration, abstracteth the minde from all thinges created, stirreth vp deuotion, and causeth that a mā doth sooner adheare to the consideration of those thinges, which in readinge offered him a more pleasant



taft, that, that wherwith the heart aboundeth may oftner occur to his memorie.

Conti-  
nuall me-  
mory of  
God.

Sixthly, continuall memory of God almighty, and dayly imagination of his sacred presence, that alwayes thou art in his sight, with a frequent vse of aspirations which S. AVGVSTINE calleth iaculatorie prayers. For these doe gaurd the palace of the mind, conseruinge deuotion in her seruour: that a man is alwayes willinge to pious actions, and ready to holy prayer: this document is one of the principall instrumentes of a spirituall life, and the only remedy for those, who haue neither time nor place with opportunity, to insist to longer prayer and meditation, and they which doe thus bestowe their labour to frequent aspirations, will in a short time profit much.

Persene-  
rance.

Seauently, persenerance in good exercises, that so times and places be duely obserued, especially morninge and eueninge, as fittest times for prayer.

Corporall  
austeri-  
ties.

Eighthly, corporall abstinence and austerities doe much help deuotion: fastinge from meate: a frugall table: a hard bed: haire cloth: discipline, and the like. As they originally proceed frō deuotiō of the minde: so they doe not a little cherish, conserue and nourish the roote from whence they springe,

springe , which is deuotion.

Last:y , workes of mercy are a great *Worker*  
 spurr vnto deuotion, because they increas *of mercy.*  
 the confidence we haue to appeare before  
 God, and to be presented before his sacred  
 Maiestie: they doe accōpanie our prayers:  
 and finally they merite that they be sooner  
 heard of God, especially seeinge they pro-  
 ceed from a mercifull heart.



K 3

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

*Nine impedimentes of deuotion.*

**A**S there be nine thinges which doe promote deuotion, so likewise there be nine impedimentes that doe hinder the same.

*Veniall  
sinns.*

The first impediment of deuotion is, sinnes not only mortall, but also veniall, for these although they doe not quite abolish charitie, yet at leastwise they diminish the seruour of it, and consequently make vs lesse apt vnto deuotion. Wherefore with all diligence they are to be auoided, not only for the euill they bringe with them, but also for the good which they hinder.

*Remorse  
of con-  
science.*

Secondly, remorse of conscience proceedinge from sins, when it is in extreames because it doth disquiete the minde, weakeneth the heade, and maketh a man vnfit for actes of vertue.

*Anxiety  
of heart.*

Thirdly, anxietie of heart and inordinate sadnes, for with these, the delight of a good conscience and spirituall ioy of the inward minde, can hardly lute and agree.

Fourthly, too many cares which doe dis-



disquiete the mind, like the Egyptian pre-  
fects who did oppresse the children of *Cares of the mind.*

ISRAEL with too immoderate labours:  
nor will euer suffer them to take that spiri-  
tuall repose, which they should haue often  
had in prayer. Yea at that time aboue  
others they disturbe the mind, endeauo-  
ringe to seduce her from her spirituall  
exercise.

Fifthly, a multitude of affaires, which *Affaires.*  
take vp our whole time, suffocates the  
spirit, scarce leauinge for a man a moment  
to employ in God almightie his seruice.

Sixthly, delightes and pleasures of the *Delights of the senses.*  
senses, for these make spirituall exercises  
vnfauioury, and a man vnworthy to be  
recreated with heauenly consolations, for  
as saint BERNARD saith, he is not worthy  
of the visitations of the holy ghost that  
seeketh after worldly solace.

Seauēthly inordinate delighte in eatinge *Inordi-  
nate de-  
light in  
eatinge  
and drink-  
inge.*  
and drinkinge: especially longe and  
sumptuous suppers, which make a man  
vnapt to spirituall exercises. For when the  
body is oppressed with too much meate,  
the spirit cannot so freely eleuate it selfe to  
God.

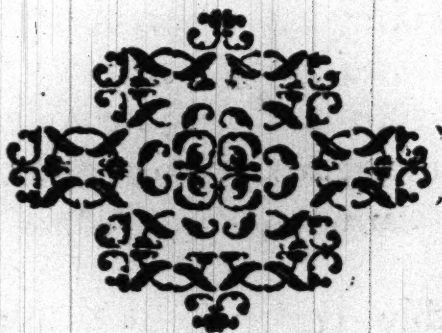
Eighthly curiositie of the senses and *curiosity of the senses.*  
vnderstandinge, as to see sightes and heare  
newe rumours, because these doe spend

pretious time, disturbe and ouerthrough the tranquillitie of the minde distractinge it with many impertinences, which can be no small hinderance to deuotion.

*Intermis-  
sion of  
exercises.*

Lastly, an intermission of our wonted exercises, except when they are not omitted or differred for a pious cause or iust necessitie. For the spirit of deuotion is delicate: which when it is gone it hardly retourneth againe, at least with great difficultie. For as trees and plantes must be watered in due season otherwise they wither away and perish: so deuotion, except it be watred with the waters of holy meditation, doth easily vanish.

These thinges we haue set downe breifly, that they may be the better remembered, vse and experience of them will afford a longer explication.



## CHAP. IV.

*Of the common temptations vvhich for  
the most part assault those, vvho  
giue themselves to meditations: as  
also of the remedies against them.*

**N**OW let vs see with what temptations they which frequent, the exercise of prayer and meditation are molested: that we may provide conuenient remedies for them. Which be these.

1. The want of spirituall consolations.
2. A multitude of vnprofitable thoughtes.
3. Thoughtes of infidelitie and blasphemy.
4. Fancies in the night. 5. Sleepinesse and drowinesse.
6. Diffidence of goinge forward.
7. Too much presumption of their owne sanctitie.
8. Inordinate desire of learninge.
9. And indiscreet zeale.

These are the common temptations which doe trouble those which would leade a vertuous life.



Of the first temptation, and the remedie  
therof.

*What to  
doe in  
the time  
of drownesse  
of spirit.*

**T**O him that wanteth spirituall cōsolations, this is the remedie, that therefore he omitteth not his customarie exercises of prayer, although they seeme vnsauourie and of no fruite, but let him set him selfe in the presence of God, cominge before him as guilty of many grieuous sins, let him search diligently, the corners of his owne conscience, and consider whether or no through his owne default, he hath lost this grace, if so, let him beseech God almighty to pardon him for this sinne, admiringe the inestimable riches of his diuine patience in toleratinge vs so longe.

By this meanes he will reape no small fruite from his aridity of spirit, takinge from thence occasion of profounder humilitie when he considereth his owne malice and perversnes in heapinge vp of sin, or of more ardent affection when he seeth God almighties goodnes in pardoninge the same. And although he enioyeth no pleasure at all in his exercises, let him not therefore abstaine from the continuation of them, for it is not alwayes necessary, that it should be sweet and saoury to the present

lent tast, which wilbe hereafter profitable. Especially when it is often seen by experience that those who constantly perseuer in their intended exercises, not giuinge ouer in the time of this aridity, but continue them with what care and diligence possibly they are able, that these I say, depart from this table recreated with many heavenly consolations, and much spirituall ioy, seinge they find nothinge to be omitted on their partes. It is but a small matter to protract prayer for a longe space when it floweth with consolations, but when these are taken away, not to desist, is an admirable act of vertue: for in this humility shineth, patience is eminent, and true perseuerance in good workes, is manifested.

But it is necessary in the time, of aridity, to haue a greater care of himselfe, watchinge ouer himselfe with greater diligence, to discusse his conscience more sincerely, and to obserue all his wordes and actions more accurately. For then when alacrity and spirituall ioy ( which is the principall oare of this navigation ) is absent, with greater vigilance the defect of grace is to be supplied.

When thou findest thy selfe to be in this state, thou oughtest to thinke, as S.

B E R-

There-  
ward of  
those  
who in  
the time  
of drinesse  
of spirit,  
doe not  
leave of  
ther  
wonted  
exercises.

BERNARD admonisheth, that the sentinells which did watch thee, are a sleepe, that the walls that did defend thee, are broken downe, and therefore the only hope of safegard to consist in armes, when all is gone which did otherwise protect thee, safety is to be sought with an armed hand. O what deserued glory followeth such a soule, which winneth the triumphant lawrell after such a manner, she fighteth a combate with the enemy without either sword or buckler, is valient without helpe, who although she be alone susteineth the wholl battaile, with as much courage, as though she were compassed round about with troopes of auxiliatorie forces.

This is the cheifest prooffe, wherby the syncerity, and goodnes of the freindes of God is knowne, wherby the true are seuered from false seruantes.

*A remedie for the second temptation.*

*What to  
doe vrbē  
we haue  
vnprofi-  
table  
thoughtes.*

**A**gainst the temptation of importune and vnprofitable cogitations which are wont to vex those that pray, and disquiet them with no small molestation, this is the remedie. To resist them manfully, provided alwayes, that resistance be not  
ioy-



ioyned with too much violence and anxietie of spirit. Seeinge this worke dependeth not so much of our strength, as God almighties grace and profound humilitie. Wherefore when any one is besett with these temptatiōs, let him confidently tourne himselfe to God without any scruple or anxietie of mind, (seeinge this is no fault or at least a very small one) with great submission and deuotion of heart, sayinge, behould Lord, behould what I am? what other thinge can be looked for frō this ordure but such filthy saouours? What other fruite can be expected from this earth which thou didest curse in the beginninge of the world, but thornes and thistles? What good cā it bringe forth, except thou lord doest purge it from all corruptiō? this beinge said, let him retourne to cōtinue his meditations with patience expectinge the visitation of our lord, who is neuer wantinge to the humble of spirit. If yet the tumult of these troublesome fancies doth not cease, neuertheless let him still resist constantly, repellinge the force of them to the vttermoſt of his power. From this perseuerant battaile (beleeue me) he will reape more gaine and merite, then if he had enioyed the greatest consolations in his meditation.

*A remedy for the third temptation.*

*Temptations of  
thoughtes  
of bla-  
phemy  
ought to  
be con-  
temned.*

**T**O overcome the temptation of blasphemous thoughtes, we must knowe as there is no temptation so troublesome to a pious mind. So likewise there is none less dangerous. Therefore the best remedie is to contemne them. For seeinge sinne consisteth not in sense, but delight of those things we thinke of. But in these there is no pleasure, but rather tortour. Therefore they may chalinge the name of punishment rather then of sinne. And the more vexatiō is in them, the further of we are from consentinge vnto any sinne, therefore it is best not to feare, but contemne them: seeinge feare maketh them more stronge and violent.

*A remedie for the fourth temptation.*

**A**gainst the temptations of infidelitie, he who is vexed with such cogitations, on the one side let him consider the imbecilitie of mans condition, on the other side the greatnes of the diuine power, to whome nothinge is imposible: those thinges which God hath commanded let him alwayes bare in mind; for others let him  
newer

neuer busy himselfe in searchinge curiously the workes of supreme maiettie, seeing the least of them doe farr transcend humane capacity. Wherefore he that desireth to enter in to this sanctuary of Gods workes, let him enter with profound humility and reuerence, endued with the eyes of a simple doue, not of a subtile serpent: and let him bare the mind of a meeke disciple, and not of a temerarious iudge, let him put on the shape of a child for such our lord maketh partakers of his diuine secrettes, let him not minde to search or knowe the causes of Gods workes, let him shutt the eyes of naturall reason, and open the eyes of faith. For these are the haies wherewith Gods workes ought to be handled. Humane vnderstandinge is able to comprehend the workes of men, but not of God, seeinge they are not capable of so much light.

Inconsidering Gods workes good heed ought to be taken.

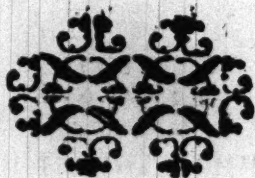
This temptation seeinge it is one of the greatest, which doth assault men, and bringeth none, or small delight with it, is to be cured with the remedy of the precedent temptation. That is, to make slight of it, for it cannot stain the soule with any great blemish, because where the will is contrarye there is no daunger of any sinne.



*A remedy for the fifth temptation.*

*Fear is  
ouercome  
vvith  
fightinge  
not vvith  
flyinge.*

**T**Here are some who are troubled with many feares and fancies when they goe to pray in solitary places, remote from the company of men, against which temptation, there is no more efficacious remedie then for a mā to arme himselfe with a curragious mind, perseueringe in his exercise, for this feare is ouercome with fightinge, not with flyinge: moreouer let him consider, that the deuill nor any other thinge what soeuer else can hurt vs, except God permitts. Let him also consider, that we are compassed about with a custody of Angels, which doe guard vs, as well in, as out of prayer, they assist vs carryinge vp our prayers to heauen, they help vs to bringe to nothinge the deuises of our crafty enemy, and to confound all his mischieuous plottes.



## A remedie for the sixth temptation.

**T**O ouercome sleepe, wherwith some,  
that meditate are often molested: we  
must consider, that sometime it proceedeth  
from mere necessity, and then it is not to  
be denied the body what is its due, least it  
hindreth what is our right. Some times it  
proceedeth out of infirmitie, then he must  
take heede not to vex himselfe too much,  
seeinge herein is no sinne at all: but mode-  
rately as much as strength suffereth, resi-  
stinge it: nowe vsinge some industry, then  
some small violēce, that prayer doth not al-  
together perish, without which, nothinge  
in this life cā be had secure, but when it cō-  
meth out of slouth, or from the deuill, then  
there is no better remedy then to abstaine  
from wine, and not to vse water in aboun-  
dance, but as much as quencheth his thirst,  
to pray vpon his knees, or after some  
other painefull gesture of the body, let  
him vse discipline or other corporall au-  
sterity to driue sleepe from his eies. To  
conclude, the remedy of this, and all others  
is, instantly to implore his assistance, who  
is ready to giue it to all, so they aske it fer-  
uently and constantly.

Drowsi-  
ness in  
prayer ar-  
iseth  
from a  
threefold  
cause.

*A remedie for the seauenth temptation.*

Man ought  
cheisly to  
rely vpon  
Gods grace  
not his  
owne  
merits.

**A** Gainst the temptations of diffidēce and presumption, seeinge they in them selues be contrary, it is requisite to apply diuers remedies. Against diffidence: let him consider, that we doe not rest vpon our owne merits, but vpon God almighties grace, who is so much the more willinge to assist man, by how much the more he is diffident of his owne forces, placinge a firme hope in the goodnes of God, to whome nothinge is impossible: the remedy for presumption is, to consider, that the most euident and certaine argument is, that a man is yet furthest from true sanctitie, when he thinketh himselfe to be neerest.

More-ouer let him looke vpon himselfe in the liues of saintes, who nowe raigne with CHRIST, or liue yet in this mortall life, as in a lookinge glasse, to which of these he doth compare himselfe, he will see, that he is no more then a dwarfe in respect of a giant, which consideration will not a little suppress his pride.



*A remedie for the eighth temptation.*

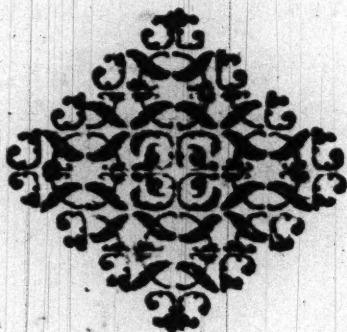
**A**gainst the inordinate desire of studie and learninge: it is good to consider how farr vertue exceedeth science: and how much the knowledge of God excelleth humane wisdom. Hence a man may learne how necessarie it is, to bestowe more labour vpon one, then vpon the other. Moreouer the world hath all the excellence that can be desired, but cannot auoyd this misery, that it must end with life. What then more miserable then to seeke after that with so much labour, and expence which so quickly perisheth? If all things in the world could be knowne, they are but as nothings, and therefore it is much better to exercise our selues in the loue of God, the fruite wherof remaineth for euer, and in whome we see and knowe, all things. Last of all, in the day of iudgment, we shall not be asked what we haue read, but what we haue done, not how eloquently we haue spoken, but how well we haue liued.

*The diuine  
wisdom  
doth infi-  
nitely ex-  
ceed hu-  
mane pru-  
dence.*

*A remedie for the ninth temptation.*

*The sal-  
nation of  
our nei-  
bour is so  
to be re-  
garded  
that we  
doe not  
neglect  
our  
owne  
soules.*

**T**He cheifest remedie against indiscreet zeale of helpinge others, is, so to attende to the good of our neighbours, that we hurte not our selues : and so to haue a care of the consciences of others , that we neglect not our owne, but in assistinge the it is good to reserue so much time , as is sufficient to conserue the heart in deuotion and recollection. And this is, as S. PAVLE saith: *Ambulare in spiritu* : to walke in spirit, that is to say that a man be more in God then in himselfe . Seeinge therefore that the prime roote of all our good vpon this dependeth, we must strue, that our prayer be so profounde and longe , as may conserue the soule in deuotion , which euery short meditation is not able to doe , but deuoute and longe.



CHAP.

## C H A P. V.

*Other certaine admonitions necessarie  
for spirituall persons.*

**T**H E thinge that affordeth greatest difficulty in this spirituall iournie, is , to knowe how to come to God, and to conuerse with him familiarly. Let therefore none dare to enter into this way without a good guide, and well instructed with necessarie admonitions and documentes, of which we will sett downe a fewe, accordinge to our wounted breuitie.

The first is, wherby we are taught what end we must aime at in these our spirituall exercises. We must therefore knowe that since to communicate with God almightie of it selfe is most delightfull, hauinge no bitternes mixed with it, as the wise man testifieth: hence it cometh to passe that many allured with the pleasure of this admirable and vnused sweetnes (which is greater then can be comprehended) come to God and frequent these spirituall actions, as re-  
dinge, prayer, meditation, vse of the Sacra-

*The error  
and abuse  
of some.*



ment, for the great contēt and delight they take in them, so that for the principall end wherwith they are moued, is this admirable sweetnes which they vehemently desire. This is a great error and many are plunged in it, for seeinge to loue and seeke God should be the cheifest end of all our actions, these loue and seeke themselves, that is to say, their owne gust and sensible delight, rather then God, which was the scope of the contemplatiue Philosophie of the gentills. Especially as a certaine Doctour saith, that this is a kind of auarice, luxurie, and spirituall gluttonie, no less pernicious then carnall. From this error springeth an other braunch. (To wit) that many iudge themselves, and others accordinge to the ebbinge, and flowvinge of consolations, so farr that they are perswaded, that a man is more, or lesse perfect by howe much more or lesse, he is visited with diuine consolatiōs. This is a great mistake.

*What  
should be  
the end of  
spirituall  
exercises.*

Against both these temptations this generall doctrine is a remedy: that euerie one must knowe that the scope of all these exercises, and the cheife end of a spirituall life, is the obseruinge of Gods cōmaundemētes, and a perfect fullfillinge of his diuine vvill: to this it is necessarie that our ovvne vvill be mortified, that the vvill of God may the  
bet.

better liue and raigne in vs. Seeinge both these are directly contrarie the one to the other. But this noble victorie seeing it cannot be obtained vvithout speciall fauour and allurementes of God, therefore vve ought to frequent the exercise of prayer, the better by it (and indeed the only meanes) to obtaine this grace, and to bringe this serious busines of our soules perfection to a good and desired end. With this intention vve may confidently desire of God internall consolations, as vve haue saied before. This did the Prophet DAVID vvhen he saied: *Redde mihi Domine latitiam salutaris tui, & spiritu priucipali confirma me:* Giue me, ô Lord, the ioy of thy saluation, and confirme me with thy principall spirit.

Hence it is manifest, what end euerie one ought to prefix to himselfe in these exercises, and howe they should esteeme and measure their owne and others profit: not accordinge to the multitude of flowinge consolations. But accordinge to those thinges they haue constantly suffered for God, partly in fulfilling his diuine pleasure, partly in renouncing their owne proper wills.

And that this ought to be the end of all our prayer and readinge it appeareth by that one Psalme of the Prophet DAVID

which beginneth : *Beati immaculati in via, qui ambulant in lege Domini* : Blessed are the immaculate in the way , which walke in the lawe of our Lord. Which is the longest Psalme in the Psalter , notwithstanding there is not one verse in it , in which there is not mention of the lawe of God, and keepinge his cōmaundemētes, Which the holy Ghost hath so ordeined, that mē may learne to direct all prayer, and readinge to this end and scope. From which they that doe decline, doe cast themselues into the secret snares of the enemy, who with his suttle craft perswadeth them that, that is some great matter which indeed is nothings, and for this cause men most exercised in spirituall matters doe affirme, the only touchstone of true vertue to be, not that sensible delight which is founde in prayer: but patience in affliction , abnegation of ones owne selfe, a sincere and enteire fullfillinge of the diuine will , and finally in a diligent obseruinge of God almighties lawes and cōmaundemētes, though I must confesse that prayer it selfe, and the frequēt consolatiōs that are founde therein, doe not a little conduce and help to the better effectinge of these thinges fore mentioned.

They which are desirous to knowe how much progresse they haue made in  
the



the way of God, let them examine how much they haue increased in interiour and exterior humilitie: how willingly they haue put vp iniuries, with what minde they haue borne with others infirmities: how they haue compationated the imperfections of their neighbours: what confidence they haue had in God in the tedious time of tribulation: how they haue bridled their tongues: how they haue kept their heart: how they haue mortified their flesh with all vnlawfull delights, and made it subiect to the spirit. With what moderation they haue behaued them selues in prosperitie and aduersitie; With what grauitie and discretion they haue gouerned all their actions: and aboue all how dead they haue beene to the world, with all its pleasures, honours, and dignities: and accordingly as they haue profited in these vertues let them measure their perfection, and not accordinge to the consolations wherewith God hath visited them, wherfore let euerie one be sure to beare one hande and the cheifest ouer himselfe in mortification, the other in prayer, seeinge the one can not be attained vnto without the other.

*The signes  
by which  
we may  
coniecture  
howe  
much we  
haue pro-  
fited in  
the way  
of perfe-  
ction.*

*The second Admonition.*

**A**S it is not lawfull to desire consolations and spirituall comforts, to that end, that in them we should sett vp our rest, but only as they assist vs in our spirituall progresse, much lesse is it lawfull to wish for visions, reuelations and the like, which to those who are not well grounded in humility, may be a great cause of their vtter ruine, neither is there any reason to feare, that those who refuse or reiect the should be disobedient to God, because when it shall please God to reueale any thinge, he will doe it after such a fashion, that he to whome such thinges shall be reuealed, shalbe so certaine of them, that he will haue no reason either to feare or doubt, though he should himselfe neuer so much strue against them.

*The third Admonition.*

**W**E must haue a speciall care, not to speake to others, those sensible consolations, which God almightie hath bene pleased to recreate vs with all. Except it be to our spirituall directour. Hence it is that, that mellifluous Doctour was wont  
to

to aduise euery one to haue these wordes  
written in great letters in his chamber:  
MY SECRET TO MYSELFE: MY  
SECRET TO MYSELFE.

*The fowvrth Admonition.*

**M**OREouer we must alwayes take <sup>ye</sup>  
good heede to deale with God, <sup>must</sup>  
with much humilitie and reuerence, neuer <sup>all waies</sup>  
to esteeme our selues so high in his fauour, <sup>remain</sup>  
as we neglect to cast downe our cies vpon <sup>in humili-</sup>  
our owne basenes, and to shrowd our  
winges in the presence of so great a ma-  
iestie, as holy S. A V G V S T I N E was wont  
to doe, of whome it is written, that he had  
learned to reioyce before God with feare  
and tremblinge.

*The fifth Admonition.*

**W**E haue heretofore counsailed the  
seruant of God, that he cōsecrateth  
some certaine time of the day to recol-  
lectiō. But now besids the ordinarie course,  
we say, that he must some times sequester  
himselfe from all busines, and emploimēts,  
as much as is possible, and giue himselfe  
wholly ouer to deuotion, the better to satt  
his soule with the aboundance of spirituall  
dainties, recoueringe his dayly losses, and  
get-



gettinge newe force to goe forward in his spirituall iourney. Which although it be not amisse to doe at all times, yet more specially, vpon the principall feasts of the yeare: in the time of temptation: after a longe iourney: after troublesome busines, which gaue matter of much distraction, that then we exclude from our soules all exteriour thinges, and call our selues back againe to the point from whence we did digresse.

*The sixth Admonition.*

**T**Here be many which be not discreet in their spirituall exercises, when they enioy heauenly consolations, and it oftentimes falleth out, that this prosperitie doth expose them to manifest perill, for when God almightie shewreth downe, more abundantly this celestiall dewe, vpo their soules, they are so rauished with the sweetness of it, that they addict themselves without measure to this only exercise: to this end they prolonge the time of prayer, macerate themselves with watchinge and other corporall austerities, so that nature it selfe at length is constrained to sinke vnder the burthen of such indiscreet mortification. Hence it cometh to passe, that many  
ab-

abhorre spirituall exercises, and some are not only made by this meanes vnfit for corporall, but also dull for spirituall labours of prayer and meditation. Wherefore in all these, there is great neede of discretion, especially in the beginninge, when spirituall consolations be more feruent, and commonly whē discretion is least. For we must so order our diet that we doe not faint in the midst of our iourney. On the contrary there be some so slouthfull and vndeuous, that vnder the colour of discretion, immoderately make much of theselues, refusinge the least labour, or trouble. This although it be dangerous to all, but especially to beginners. For as S. BERNARD saith, it is impossible that he should perseuer longe in a spirituall course, who is discreet at first. That whē he is a nouice esteemeth himselfe wise, and when he is younge governeth himselfe like an old man. Neither can I easily iudge which of these, be more dangerous. Except, as THOMAS A KEMPIS saith, the first is more incurable, for whilst the body is stronge and sounde, there may be hopes to cure tepidity: but when it is once weakened through indiscretion, it scarce euer can be brought to its former seruour.

*The seventh Admonition.*

**T**Here is yet an other daunger, more pernicious then the former, which is, that some hauinge experience of this inestimable vertue of prayer, that all the fruite of a spirituall life doth depend vpon it. Hence they perswade themselves, that in it all is conteined. And that only, that vertue doth suffice for our saluation, which makes them to neglect other vertues, which are likewise the foundations and proppes which doe uphold a spirituall buildinge, which beinge taken away the wholl fabrick falleth to ruine; wherefore they that seeke after this one only vertue with such indiscreet auditie, the more they labour the lesse suite they reape. But the seruant of God that expecteth merit and comfort in the way of perfection must not fix his eies so much vpon one only vertue, although it be neuer so rare and excellent, but generally attend to all, as one stringe vpon an instrument maketh no musique, except we strike the rest: so one vertue cannot make a spirituall harmonic in our soules, if the other be

wan-



wantinge , not vnlike a clock , which if there be but a fault in one whele , the others will stand . So it is in a spirituall clock , if one vertue be deficient.

*The eighth Document.*

**T**Hese thinges which we haue hertherto saied , which doe help to deuotion. Are so to be taken as preparatories, wherwith a man doth dispose himselfe to God almightie his grace , and behaue himselfe manfully in his holy seruice , with this caution, that we should not put our confidence in them, but in God.

This I say because, there are some which labour to reduce all rules into art, thinking that they haue attained to the perfection of that exercise, if they obserue exactly the rules therof. But they which put good principalls into practice, vwill quicky attaine vnto their desired end, vvhich doinge, they care not to reduce grace into art, nor to attribute that to humane rules, vvhich is the gift of God. Hēce vve say that it is not necessarie to follooue these rules, and documentes as dependinge of art, but as instrumentes of grace. Because  
a man

a man vwill learne thus to knowve, that the principall meanes, vvhich one ought to seeke after, is profound humilitie, vvith the consideration of our ovvne basenes, and a great confidence in God almighties mercie. To the end that vve may come to the knowvledge of the one and the other, let vs povvre out teares vvithout intermission, and continually pray, that as vve expect at the gate of humilitie, so vve may obtaine by it, all our desires, and perseuere in humble thankesgiuinge to the diuine bountie, vvithout any trust to our ovvne vvorkes or any thinge that is ours.

AD HONOREM DEI.

F. I N. I S.





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